

# SALUS POPULI

— THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF THE THOMAS R. KLINE SCHOOL OF LAW OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY —

— SPRING 2025 —



## Enduring and Evolving Evening Excellence

THIS  
ISSUE

From Champion to Chancellor

Paralegal Prominence

Faculty Highlights





# Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Spring 2025 issue of our alumni magazine, where we celebrate the continued growth and achievements of our community.

University President Ken Gormley, former dean of our Law School, has announced he will step down at the end of the 2025-26 academic year. His contributions to our institution have been extraordinary, and I deeply value his mentorship throughout my tenure as dean. I am pleased to share that the University's Board of Directors has asked him to remain as Chancellor upon his stepping down as President, ensuring his continued influence on our University's growth. His tribute appears on page 18, and we will dedicate an upcoming issue to celebrating his remarkable achievements.

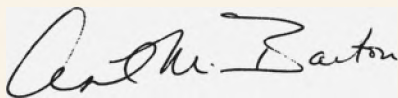
I am delighted to report that we have risen two places in the 2025-2026 *U.S. News & World Report* rankings to #92, reaffirming our position among the top 100 law schools nationally. This success builds on our dramatic rise three years ago—the largest improvement of any law school that year—when the revised methodology began factoring in employment outcomes and bar passage rates, areas where our school consistently excels. We continue to outperform many institutions with higher admissions metrics in these crucial measures of graduate success (p. 12).

Our evening division, a cornerstone of our nearly 115-year legacy of accessible legal education, continues to evolve. Founded to serve working-class students pursuing law degrees while maintaining employment, this program embodies our commitment to transformative, practical, ethics-centered legal education.

In response to alumni feedback, we implemented a flexible attendance option for our evening program last fall. While maintaining our primarily in-person approach, students can now attend select classes via video conference when necessary due to work commitments or other conflicts. This limited remote option preserves our interactive classroom environment and strong community bonds, while accommodating real-world challenges our students face (p. 14).

As always, I am deeply grateful for your support as we continue our positive trajectory while remaining true to our founding mission. ■

*With gratitude,*



**April Mara Barton**  
*Dean and Professor of Law*



**Our evening division,  
a cornerstone of our  
nearly 115-year legacy  
of accessible legal  
education, continues  
to evolve.**





14 | ENDURING AND EVOLVING  
EVENING EXCELLENCE

18 | FROM CHAMPION  
TO CHANCELLOR

20 | PARALEGAL PROMINENCE





# SALUS POPULI

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF THE  
THOMAS R. KLINE SCHOOL OF LAW  
OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

## DEAN

April M. Barton

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AND DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Amanda Drumm

## CONTRIBUTORS

Jurry Bajwah  
Beth Bauer  
Maria Comas  
Amanda Dabbs  
Amanda Drumm  
Pete Giglione  
Richard Heppner  
Erin Karsman  
Beth Licciardello  
Liz McCadden  
Kate Norton  
Dayen Wilson

## DESIGN

Douglas Miller  
Duquesne University Division of Marketing  
and Communications

## CONTACT US

duq.edu/law | lawalumni@duq.edu  
412.396.5215



© 2025 by the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University

Reproduction in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher, is prohibited.

25 | Young Alumni Profile

26 | Alumni Profile

28 | Class Actions

31 | In Memoriam

32 | Alumni Events

34 | Faculty Highlights

36 | Student Briefs

42 | Juris



# Duquesne Kline School of Law Named a Best Value Private Law School

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University was named a Best Value Private Law School in *preLaw Magazine's* fall 2024 issue. The student-centric outcomes at Duquesne Kline School of Law propelled its place in this ranking.

*preLaw Magazine* determined best value law schools by weighing bar exam (15%), employment results (30%) and costs (55%). Every ABA-accredited law school received a grade based on this methodology.

Duquesne Kline School of Law performed extremely well in both its ultimate bar passage and employment rates. 2024 graduates achieved an impressive 88.72% first-time taker pass rate on the July 2024 Pennsylvania bar exam, which is six percentage points higher than the statewide overall passage rate of 82.56%. Additionally, the Duquesne Kline School of Law's overall passage rate of 84.83%, which includes repeat takers, significantly outpaced the Pennsylvania overall passage rate of 76.69%. Duquesne Kline School of Law employment outcomes also outpace national averages. The American Bar Association

(ABA) released 10-month employment statistics in March from law schools nationwide regarding the class of 2023. Out of the 137 members of the Duquesne Kline School of Law Class of 2023, 96.4% (132/137) of graduates were employed or pursuing a graduate degree.

Tuition at Duquesne Kline School of Law includes generous opportunities for merit and need-based scholarships. Pittsburgh has an affordable cost of living with many prospects for externships and internships at legal firms, government offices and courts.

Dean April Barton credits the Duquesne Kline School of Law community for this achievement. She said, "We are a law school on an upward trajectory by every measure. Our faculty and staff's dedication, innovation and unparalleled commitment to our students prepare them for their careers. Our students take their roles as the next generation of lawyer leaders seriously, evidenced in their achievements while in law school and after commencement." ■

## Duquesne Kline School of Law named finalist in *Bloomberg Law's* 2024-2025 Law Innovation Program

By Amanda S. Drumm

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University was selected as a finalist in *Bloomberg Law's* 2024-2025 Law School Innovation Program. Designated as one of 10 finalists, Duquesne Kline School of Law was chosen for its innovative Law and Computing Concentration.

According to *Bloomberg Law*, finalists are "recognized for implementing and leading innovative programs into their curricula that advance new methodologies and approaches to student instruction, technology implementation and usage, experiential learning, and other facets of legal education."

The groundbreaking Law and Computing Concentration at Duquesne Kline School of Law harnesses the power of modern computing to improve the legal profession and increase access to justice. It enhances the modern lawyer's repertoire by teaching programming as a modern lawyer may need to use it, with an important focus on justice.

"Duquesne Kline School of Law's Law and Computing Concentration equips students for the changes in the legal profession because of emerging technology. It also provides the opportunity to develop an aptitude in designing legal technology that can ethically and thoughtfully impact our society," said Dean of the Duquesne Kline School of Law April Barton.

Students who study this concentration at Duquesne Kline School of Law may take courses such as eDiscovery, Coding for

Lawyers, and Statistics and Machine Learning. There are also about 10 other elective law and technology courses students can take.

The Law and Computing Concentration equips students for changes in the legal profession because of advancing technology. It also provides the opportunity to develop an aptitude in designing legal technology.

"We introduce law students to computer programming and computational thinking generally. In the first-year curriculum, we introduce programming techniques in mini-modules to increase students' computational legal literacy and to alert them to other possible career paths. The new possibilities could involve practice areas in traditional legal jobs or in the creation of devices that will improve our understanding of the law, decrease the justice gap or automate the most mundane of legal tasks," said Wesley Oliver, professor of law and director of the Law and Computing program.

Duquesne Kline School of Law is among a very small group of law schools nationwide offering computer programming courses, even for those with no prior background in the field. In addition to the courses and concentration currently being offered, in fall 2025 Duquesne Kline School of Law will pilot a Tech Track with a handful of entering students who wish to integrate programming courses beginning in the first year. ■



# Ideas and Support for Older Pennsylvanians Shared at Recent Elder Justice Consortium Meeting

By Amanda S. Drumm



The Elder Justice Consortium of Pennsylvania Law Schools (EJC) met for its third annual meeting with the justices of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Nov. 19 in Hershey, Pa. The group includes deans from all Pennsylvania law schools, faculty and administrative representatives of each school's experiential programming.

The EJC unites Pennsylvania law schools around the goal of providing stronger, critical support for older Pennsylvanians. Advice, advocacy and education are cornerstones of the consortium, with the goal to inspire law students to continue elder justice work after the transition from law student to attorney.

"We are so fortunate to have this group of caring individuals in the law profession who are committed to elder justice service and the continuation of this important cause for future legal generations," said Dean April Barton of the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University.

Barton co-hosted the meeting and the subsequent dinner alongside Dean Danielle Conway of Penn State Dickinson Law, and Dean André Douglas Pond Cummings of Widener Commonwealth Law School.

EJC Co-Chairs Grace Orsatti, assistant professor of law at Duquesne Kline School of Law, and Mary Catherine Scott, associate clinical professor at Widener Commonwealth Law, led discussions focused on the EJC's work from the past year and highlights of the work individual law schools performed in the elder justice area, including the National Healthcare Directive Day and community resource events. The group also planned new initiatives for the upcoming year and highlighted the initiatives within the individual law schools.

EJC member Kate Norton, co-associate dean for faculty scholarship, director of Clinical and International Programs, and associate professor of law at Duquesne Kline School of Law, was in attendance. She helped to coordinate a lunch and learn last spring for Duquesne Kline School of Law students in honor of National Healthcare Decision Day, an EJC-sponsored event for students throughout Pennsylvania. This EJC event and others are critical to helping students understand elder law and justice.

"By having our students partake in these types of events through the EJC, we are hoping they appreciate issues surrounding elder justice and support it in their careers," said Norton. ■



# Unique Book Collection from Special Friendship Graces Library

By Amanda S. Drumm

The first time Bruce Ledewitz, Adrian Van Kaam Endowed Chair in Scholarly Excellence and professor of law, met fellow Professor of Law Robert Taylor, L'79, was during the summer of 1980. The two began teaching at the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University that year. Taylor was 14 years senior to Ledewitz, who had recently graduated from Yale Law School. Initially, they became acquainted through scholarly pursuits.

"Robert created a study group of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, and we learned something about language," Ledewitz said.

From that preliminary study group, Taylor and Ledewitz formed a close friendship, with Taylor assuming a mentor role. As Ledewitz said, Taylor continued to teach him in all the years he was at Duquesne Kline School of Law through their shared love of learning. That knowledge flourished in the scholarly sessions they conducted jointly for more than four decades.

"It is a remarkable thing to have that type of relationship over 45 years," Ledewitz said. Their kinship and scholastic partnership were celebrated Nov. 13 through the bequest of a special collection of books at the Ken Gormley Law Library at Duquesne Kline School of Law.

The collection of books was donated by Taylor and Ledewitz and includes the works they collected and studied together. Each book in the collection contains a book plate stating how the duo used said book to inform their philosophies, teaching and selves. There will be more than 1,000 books in the collection when the cataloging of the books is finished.

"It celebrates our relationship and gives a lot of source material to the law library," Ledewitz said.

Ledewitz is slated to retire after this spring semester, having taught Constitutional Law for Duquesne Kline School of Law for the past 40 years. Additionally, he has written in scholarly journals and has written four books. He said the two men never studied his work, although some of his volumes were inspired by their studies.

Taylor, who Ledewitz fondly refers to as a "leader of the Law School and an intellectual leader," first studied physics at the University of Pittsburgh, then pursued a degree at the Pittsburgh Seminary. He even studied briefly with Swiss theologian Karl Barth.

Taylor returned to Duquesne Kline School of Law for the ceremony marking the collection. It was the first time the 86-year-old returned to campus in 10 years after having quietly retired, except for the celebrations of him in the Law Review. Taylor was not one who wanted to be remembered with grandeur, but is appreciative of this special collection, for the academic significance it holds for future generations.

"He came to value it but never wanted to be remembered in any way by the Law School. He was excited once he got used to the idea. I think he came to feel that future generations of law students would stumble on this thing and see he studied this kind of material and think law is deeper and broader than they thought," said Ledewitz. ■

Robert Taylor/Bruce Ledewitz  
Book Collection  
Ken Gormley Law Library  
Duquesne University  
Thomas R. Kline School of Law

This book is from BL's Philosophy and Theology Collection. Contributions is a major work from Heidegger and represents his late style. BL and RT read much of Contributions together and this book reflects RT's careful alternative translations. RT also purchased the latter translation by Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu. The book jacket contains copies of several pages and the marks indicate a pause on page 215. (November 4, 2024)



# National and International Legal Experts Attend AI and Law Conference

By Amanda S. Drumm

Nearly 100 judges and attorneys from across the globe convened at the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University Dec. 2-5 for a four-day conference titled “Artificial Intelligence for Judges and Lawyers: A Comprehensive Course.” The innovative and informative conference outlined the intersection of artificial intelligence (AI) and the law. It was a collaboration between the Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education and the National Judicial College.

Ten legal and technological experts led presentations, including Duquesne Kline School of Law Dean April Barton, Professor Wesley Oliver and Adjunct Faculty Morgan Gray. The conference featured lectures and a hands-on component designed to teach coding skills. Duquesne University President Ken Gormley delivered the conference’s opening remarks alongside Barton.

“We were honored to host this gathering with the National Judicial College, which is widely recognized as the premier center for judicial education in the United States,” said Gormley. “This collaboration on a highly pertinent topic brought practical knowledge, thought-provoking discussions and meaningful networking to a group of jurists from across the country and from other parts of the globe. The conference was perfectly crafted to help these judges make wise and timely decisions when considering matters of law involving this emerging form of technology.”

**“Artificial intelligence is evolving rapidly and is reshaping the practice of law.”**

**DEAN APRIL BARTON**

The partnership also included fundamental instruction illuminating the ethical implications of AI in the law.

“We were pleased to collaborate with the National Judicial College for this high-quality program and provide a deeper understanding of the complicated and ever-changing world of technology,” Barton said.

Erin Karsman, director of the Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education and the Appellate Moot Court Program, co-coordinated the popular conference, working alongside Keith R. Fisher, Distinguished Fellow at the National Judicial College. The president of the National Judicial College, the Hon. Benes Z. Aldana, was in attendance, underscoring the significance of the event in addressing the evolving relationship between AI and the legal profession.

“Artificial intelligence is evolving rapidly and is reshaping the practice of law,” said Barton. “It is critical for judges

and attorneys to understand both the potential of AI as well as its limitations.”

Lecturers and attendees traveled internationally and from across the United States to attend the event. It was a special honor to have Chief Justice Robert J. Torres of the Supreme Court of Guam and Justice Shannon Bacon of the Supreme Court of New Mexico both lecture and participate in the event.

“We had an exceptional turnout,” said Karsman. “Of the over 90 judges and attorneys in attendance, 40 traveled from the Philippines, and one of our expert presenters joined us from the Netherlands. We were also delighted to welcome participants from across the country, including judges from Michigan, Illinois, Idaho, California, Nevada, Nebraska, Georgia and Virginia, among others.”

Beyond discussions of AI and the law, fostering camaraderie was a central theme of the event. The Kline Center hosted a lively reception on the first evening, where guests had an opportunity to connect. The conference concluded with a commencement ceremony.

“The Kline Center was honored to co-host such an informative, collegial and special conference. At the close of the event, our distinguished colleagues from the Philippines went on the stage and sang a Christmas carol in Filipino, which was a memorable end to a meaningful conference,” said Karsman. ■





# FROM Double Duker TO DEFENDER OF JUSTICE

By Amanda S. Drumm

When you talk to Professor John Rago, Arts '79, L'87, you feel like you are reconnecting with an erstwhile friend. He speaks openly and honestly, is engaging and is genuinely interested in you and the words you are saying. That is not a façade, Rago is as sincere, kind and unpretentious as his demeanor suggests. He is concurrently a man of vast knowledge, interesting connections, and a student and purveyor of truth and justice.

Rago has been a staple of Duquesne University for many years. He is a double Duker who met his wife, Ann, on the Bluff and fell in love with her—and the school. He credits many of his teachers and the Spiritans for his education and is especially grateful to many of them for being such a transformative force in his professional and personal lives.

"The Holy Ghosters are a very big part of my family's life. The Spiritan Mission has been a guiding light for us, and I owe so many of them a great debt of gratitude," Rago said. "I consider my years at Duquesne to be a blessing. I am deeply grateful to many dear friends and colleagues over the years, many of whom have since retired or gone on to their greater reward. I admire them all a great deal and I think of them often."

Rago has taught at the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University for 30 years and still draws immense inspiration from the students. He values them and regards them highly, eagerly helping them to prepare for their careers and their places in society where their work will improve our world.

"We all are fellow travelers with our students in understanding the law. In all of my classes, I find myself surrounded by a group of brilliant, dedicated and hard-working students. And as I watch them each year making their way through our day and night programs, oftentimes in the face of difficult challenges, I take great pride in working with them and watching as they become the next generation of lawyers ... fully aware, anxious and able to improve and reform policies and practices."

Along that journey, Rago says Duquesne Kline School of Law has had a longstanding and constant value.

"We all are here to give students the chance to develop their skills and talents to help others. For me, it is a noble mission, and





it is no more complicated than that.”

Rago cares deeply about the students he teaches and is equally passionate about the pursuit of truth. He previously chaired the 51-member Advisory Committee on Wrongful Convictions formed by the Pennsylvania State Senate to study wrongful convictions under the auspices of the Joint State Government Commission. The committee wrote a more than 300-page report on minimizing the risks of convicting an innocent person. Many of those recommendations have become law or have resulted in the establishment of evidence-based best practices.

“I’ve always tried to understand how best to reconcile truth and freedom in a

to study and minimize the risk of parolee homicides.

Always an advocate for others, Rago is chairman of the board for the Center for Victims, the largest organization of its kind in Pennsylvania, serving the needs of 15,000–17,000 victims every year.

“It is a wonderful group of powerful advocates for victims,” he said.

Rago’s advocacy and teaching are not exclusive of one another.

“I am very proud to be part of the Duquesne family. We are encouraged here to work in the vineyards, so to speak, with policy-making in the community, working in Harrisburg, and seeing local and state initiatives have an effect. Sometimes the chaos is fun—

Of all his recognitions and impressive work, Rago is immensely grateful to be a faculty member where his career and his family began.

“I’m very lucky. I give Duquesne a great deal of credit—for giving me the opportunity to meet my best friend and wonderful wife, for our three children and for becoming friends with some of the finest people I could ever hope to meet. I came to Duquesne as a young man uncertain of where my life would take me. I entered law school with a simple but heartfelt thought. I told Dean Sciullo, ‘I just want to help people.’ I am so grateful he bet on this nervous kid from Crafton and gave me a chance.

“I have seen Duquesne do the same for

**“We all are here to give students the chance to develop their skills and talents to help others. For me, it is a noble mission, and it is no more complicated than that. — JOHN RAGO**

criminal justice system that works but is far from perfect. Former and present students, colleagues and experts from many disciplines in the social, natural and applied sciences have been a guiding light of sorts for me. I have come to appreciate that truth and freedom are reciprocally necessary values—one cannot exist without the other. Applying that view in terms of achieving justice can be a very difficult pursuit” said Rago.

In the past, his conviction integrity work with the now deceased Sen. Stewart Greenleaf led to drafted legislation to minimize the risk of wrongful convictions in Pennsylvania. He currently serves as a member of the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing and the PBI Standard Criminal Jury Instructions Committee, and is one of two reporters appointed by Govs. Tom Wolf and Josh Shapiro to work with numerous criminal justice stakeholders

sorting through all of the noise in order to get things done,” he said.

Rago’s passion for the arts is another area of interest for him and Ann. In modest form, he mentions the work he does with the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA) and Sir Paul McCartney. When pressed, he talks about his 30-plus year working relationship with McCartney and LIPA officials. He and his wife interviewed McCartney at Wembley Stadium in 1990 for the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. McCartney had a representative call him to say that “Paul and Linda liked the story,” and they have worked together on projects supporting LIPA ever since.

At LIPA’s 2015 graduation ceremony, Rago was named an Honoured Friend of LIPA, one of the EU’s premier performing arts schools. It was co-founded by McCartney and Mark Featherstone-Witty and opened in 1996.

countless others over the years. This Law School is built on the premise of giving people a chance. Duquesne is blessed with countless special relationships in the legal community and far beyond. We have a great program with great people, great students and great results. For me to be a small part of all of this makes me happy,” Rago said. ■





# Student-Centric Outcomes Continue to Propel Duquesne Kline School of Law's Rise in U.S. News & World Report's 2025-2026 Ranking

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University continues its ascent, most recently rising two places in the *U.S. News & World Report's* 2025-2026 Best Law School overall ranking. Duquesne Kline School of Law now ranks at #92 out of 196 ranked law schools from across the nation.



This is the third consecutive year Duquesne Kline School of Law has achieved a top 100 ranking. The 2023-2024 *U.S. News & World Report's* ranking of Duquesne Kline School of Law saw the largest jump of any law school in the nation due to the update in the *U.S. News* methodology, which now factors student outcomes into its ranking formula, namely bar passage and employment rates.

Duquesne Kline School of Law has always performed extremely well in employment, first-time bar passage and

ultimate bar passage rates and has consistently outperformed state and national averages. The most recent bar passage rates are from the class of 2024, with Duquesne Kline School of Law graduates achieving six percentage points higher than the first-time taker statewide overall passage rate. Additionally, Duquesne Kline School of Law's overall passage rate, which includes repeat takers, significantly outpaced the Pennsylvania state overall passage rate by eight percentage points.

Employment outcomes at Duquesne Kline School of Law also routinely outpace national averages. The American Bar Association (ABA) released 10-month employment statistics for the class of 2023 from law schools nationwide, and Duquesne Kline outperformed the national average by 3.5%. Out of the 137 members of the Class of 2023, 96.4% (132/137) of Duquesne Kline School of Law graduates were employed or pursuing a graduate degree.

"Our students are dedicated and extremely focused, and their diligence is realized in their excellent outcomes. I also credit our faculty and staff for their unwavering commitment to our students as they prepare for their careers," said Dean April Barton. ■

## Class of 2024 is on the Rise

By Maria Comas

Every year the Career Services Office (CSO) collects information about the employment of the most recent graduating class. This information is used by the American Bar Association (ABA) and National Association of Law Placement (NALP) to publish information about the nationwide employment picture and inform prospective law students, current law students, legal employers and the public. Duquesne Kline School of Law is extremely proud to report that 94.9% of the Class of 2024 were employed or pursuing a graduate degree as of March 17, 2025, as reported to the ABA in April 2025. This includes 91.7% having full-time, long-term jobs the ABA classifies as either Bar Passage Required or JD Advantage (such as compliance, tax associate or policy work). By comparison, the national average for full-time, long-term Bar Passage Required and JD Advantage jobs is an advantage is 87.1%.

As is the case every year, the majority of employed graduates work in private law firms, and the majority of those graduates practice in firms with 2-25 attorneys. Members of the Duquesne Kline School of Law Class of 2024 secured positions in 14 locations: Delaware, Georgia, Florida, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington, D.C., West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Detailed information about the three most recent graduating classes' employment status is on the law school's website. ■

### The types of employment represented by the Class of 2024 are as follows:



**Law Firms:**

**58%**



**Government:**

**13.5%**



**Public Interest:**

**11.5%**



**Judicial Clerkships:**

**8.8%**



**Business/Industry:**

**6.8%**



**Education:**

**1.4%**



# Applauding a Law School Legend

## DR. VALERIE HARPER'S RETIREMENT CELEBRATED

By Amanda S. Drumm

Dr. Valerie Harper has been a valued, respected and trusted colleague at Duquesne University for almost four decades. On Feb. 12, she was honored for her long tenure, and her retirement was celebrated with a special party in the newly renovated student lounge. Countless students, colleagues and alumni attended the event to applaud Harper as she begins a new chapter.

Harper began working at the University in 1986 as assistant to the resident director. She labored tirelessly—at her work and on her education. She earned her master of education degree and her doctor of educational leadership degree—both from Duquesne University—while she was working. Harper's career continued to grow alongside her education and in 2006 she joined the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University as the school's registrar.

"Val and I worked together for decades, while I was professor and dean of the law school," said Duquesne University President Ken Gormley. "Besides her excellent performance as registrar, I was always in awe of her unique ability to connect with students, and her genuine concern for everyone around her. 'Dr. Val,' as I call her, has a heart of gold, and this has been a gift to the entire University."

Harper was known for her dedication to her work. Her enthusiasm was felt by her colleagues and all those who knew her. She fondly remembered beginning that position.



"I remember my first impression when I entered my new office in the School of Law. Wow! The office operated on its own and served everyone, including students. An interesting fact was it operated and served everyone completely manually. The challenge was to update the office, so it operated efficiently while still meeting its responsibilities and duties. Valuable lessons were learned and triumphs celebrated. These and many other challenges influenced me, my career and leadership as well as who I am today," Harper said.

Her role evolved beyond a registrar, as she served as a trusted mentor and advocate to colleagues and students throughout her tenure.

"Val is a treasured part of our Duquesne Kline School of Law family. She was a faithful advisor for so many of

our students and a dependable colleague and friend. She exudes genuine warmth and caring and is a shining example of kindness," said April Barton, dean of Duquesne Kline School of Law.

Harper stayed in her registrar role until 2022 when she became the director of inclusive excellence at Duquesne Kline School of Law. She is reminiscent of her past work and equally looking forward to the future.

"Despite being excited about my next steps on my life journey, I will certainly miss the camaraderie with the deans, faculty, adjuncts and staff. Also, building bridges and enhancing relationships with the law students enhanced my joy and meaningful passion and a sense of purpose in academics," Harper said. ■





# Enduring and Evolving Evening Excellence

## Evening Division Innovates with flexible JD Offering

By Amanda S. Drumm

More than 100 years ago, the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University was founded by the Spiritan order to provide a pathway to the honorable pursuit of the law. Beginning as an evening program, it delivered access to a legal education to working, immigrant families. Those students prevailed, showing grit, determination and dedication, earning their legal education. The evening division remains a testament to that initial call for flexibility and opportunity. It continues to evolve to complement the lives of working adults with its contemporary flexible offering.

The flexible JD option for incoming first-year evening division students was rolled out this past fall, for the start of the 2024-2025 academic year. It was not a decision that was hastily made, but was the culmination of a decade of legwork to ensure the quality of the evening program would not diminish and would adhere to the strict standards of legal education established by the American Bar Association (ABA).

“All the up-front accreditation work was started in the



spring of 2023. Our variance was approved that fall, and we prepared for the first class to start with the flexible JD option in the fall of 2024,” said Tara Willke, associate dean for strategic academic programs and professor of law.

The impetus for this new option was creating a mode for increased accessibility for students.

“We wanted to revitalize it to make it more accessible. While there is flexibility, there are expectations they will be here for certain classes and events,” Willke said.

The evening division is not entirely virtual but instead allows students to have the ability to attend class remotely six times a semester instead of having to attend every class in person, with professors tracking attendance.

“By requiring at least half or most in-person activity, it gives students the benefits of the rich environment of the classroom. By allowing a limited number of remote attendances, it allows them to still be able to participate in class and still learn when they have work or have family obligations. It’s a good accommodation and draws the balance of the benefits of in-person learning and makes opportunities available to their other commitments,” said Steven Baicker-McKee, Joseph A. Katarincic Chair of Legal Process and Civil Procedure and professor of law.

“It took years of planning. Evening students wanted that flexibility, and we talked and planned about what would work best for our students. It is the perfect balance; some do not want to be online and some want that flexibility. The vast majority use it very sparingly,” said Ann Schiavone, L’03, associate dean for academic affairs and professor of law.

Virtual classes are not anything new; the ABA has allowed students to obtain credits for online coursework for over a



decade. Prior to the launch of the flexible JD option, Duquesne Kline School of Law had been offering online courses to students—some have been fully online courses and other courses have had distance education components.

“In determining what worked best for our students, we looked at the trends in law schools nationally. There are several fully online programs and there are a number that have just a division online. Also, the ABA has loosened up distance education opportunities to make it easier for working professionals with family circumstances to go to law school,” said Schiavone.

Schiavone, who graduated from the evening program, is committed to strengthening the program and growing its enrollment to create more opportunities for working individuals.

“I’m a product of the evening division. It has shrunk significantly since the 60-70 students in my class when I was in the program. We don’t want to do anything to destroy the tradition and the foundation of our evening program. We want to solidify it and continue it,” she said.

The flexible JD option was softly rolled out when speaking to the incoming 2024-2025 class, with evening enrollment increasing by nearly 10 students from the previous academic year. That measure is in part due to the flexibility of the evening program.

“The flexible JD program was a big factor in my choice to attend Duquesne Kline,” said Lexie Socha, 1E.

Socha, who has worked full time and supported herself since she was 17 years old, wanted to attend law school, but needed to continue to work. She was grateful for the innovative flexible JD program, which she feels has made her legal education more accessible.

“Whether I don’t feel safe driving with a migraine or I’m experiencing a flare up, I have the option to stay safe at home and still receive the education I’m looking for. Even if you take the disability out of the equation, the program is still invaluable,” said Socha.

### Setting up for Success

The criteria for admissions remain the same for the program, but to create a





**“Evening students perform a balancing act. They typically have a job during the day and often have families and other sorts of personal commitments. They layer on all those commitments with being law students. It is incredibly impressive and challenging. The beauty of the flexible JD is it is an attempt to balance both of those demands.”**

**– STEVEN BAICKER- MCKEE**

fully engaged experience for students in the flexible JD program, the technological aspects of the classroom were examined, and high-tech innovations were made that included several months of planning. The Duquesne Kline School of Law IT team conferred on audio visual (AV) integrations with their established technical programs to create highly integrated classrooms.

“Our classrooms already have a lot of technical AV in them. Throughout the law school, we traditionally have AV equipment to facilitate online classes. We redesigned the first of the flexible JD classrooms to allow for more engagement for remote students on the dates they attend via Zoom. The classrooms are equipped with bi-directional cameras so students can see their peers online and the online students can also see their peers in person,” said Dr. Mark Dunn, assistant dean for academic technology.

The instructor is also onscreen for remote students to see. There are two drop-down screens in the classroom where students in class can see who is online, and a camera faces back at the students in the classroom for the remote students to view their classmates. There is no trouble hearing anything being said remotely or in the classroom.

“There is a very sensitive microphone in the room. The entire class can be heard with confidence,” said Dunn.

The system is intuitive, with the Zoom starting automatically for the professor who is teaching. A monitor allows the instructor to easily see who is attending remotely. A new touch panel room controller allows the instructor to send either a large shot of the class or picture of students in the room.

“It just enhances the remote student experience. Our whiteboard has a camera, and content shared on it in the classroom is shared via camera so remote students can view the written content on the whiteboard,” Dunn said.

Everyone interacts in real time, learning and collaborating.

“All professors expect you to have your video on. Professor Baicker-McKee will do the typical law school cold calling on Zoom and in person using name cards. If your name comes up, he will call on you. It bridges that gap between online and in person. I think this is the future of education, not just for law school, but for education for across the board,” said Nikhil Varma, 1E.

### **Distant not detached**

Life is full of extenuating circumstances and obligations. There are times when a person is asked to stay late at work, needs to tend to a sick family member or may not be feeling well. The flexible JD option recognizes the unpredictability of life and is used as a communication mode to enhance learning. It is a method for a person to remain connected, to learn and not miss an important lecture.

“Evening students perform a balancing act. They typically have a job during the day and often have families and other sorts of personal



commitments. They layer on all those commitments with being law students. It is incredibly impressive and challenging. The beauty of the flexible JD is it is an attempt to balance both of those demands,” said Baicker-McKee.

Nicolas Day, 1E, agreed. “It gives students and professors the option to host or attend class when the outside world interferes. Classes that would have been canceled due to bad weather, illness or something else can now be moved online without anyone missing any material. Likewise, if a student suffers an unexpected event in their life, such as me throwing my back out some weeks ago at the gym, it allows them to attend class virtually without falling behind,” he said.

For Varma, a healthcare consultant who works remotely, a flexible law program as well as ABA accreditation were reasons he chose Duquesne Kline School of Law.

“A big part of it was looking for a program that offered an online or hybrid option that was driving distance from me and an ABA accredited law school that had some flexibility in terms of working professionals,” Varma said.

ABA accreditation and the high bar pass rate remain key motivations for prospective students, with a flexible option

also of increased importance.

“I looked for programs that were ABA accredited and either fully or partially online that had an evening component to the program. I got into six schools, but Duquesne Kline has a track record of getting people to pass the bar; most places were not even close to Duquesne Kline’s rate,” said Benjamin Alayez, 1E.

From the beginning, Duquesne Kline School of Law’s evening program has empowered students and remains committed to that legacy.

“There are a multitude of barriers to law school, and the ability to customize your experience, to work full-time, to have professors who are eager to help you in any way, is a game changer,” said Socha. “Technology is ever evolving and will continue to play a large role in the way we interact with one another. The knowledge that comes with virtual attendance practice and the accessibility made widely available at Duquesne Kline can only help set students up for success.” ■





# From Champion to Chancellor

## President Ken Gormley, Former Law School Dean, to Step Down From Presidency After 2025-2026 Academic Year

By Amanda S. Drumm



Many careers are measured in length, and while it would be easy to quantify Duquesne University President Ken Gormley's career by its number of years, that summation would not begin to do justice to his profound impact on the lives of students, Duquesne University, constitutional scholarship and the greater Pittsburgh community. His announcement on March 15 that he will step down after the 2025-2026 academic year and will assume the role of Chancellor of Duquesne University reached far, with alumni and the campus community reflecting on his remarkable tenure and legacy within the Law School and the University.

Gormley, who was born and raised in Pittsburgh, began his career teaching at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and then worked in private practice. In 1994, he joined the faculty of Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University. He later ascended to become its dean, just as his star was rising as a result of his scholarship and his then-published book, *The Death of American Virtue: Clinton vs. Starr*, becoming a

*New York Times* bestseller. Gormley was even nominated to fill a Pennsylvania Supreme Court vacancy. While political deadlock stalled the nomination, luckily for the University, Gormley's stretch on the Bluff was not finished.

As dean of Duquesne Kline School of Law, his steadfast energy, drive and enthusiasm led to elevated visibility and strengthened academic quality for the school. Gormley was instrumental in the creation of the Tribone Center for Clinical Legal Education. Since its inception, it has provided more than 22,300 hours of legal service through clinical education programs.

Gormley's reach extended out to the community and inside the Law School. He focused heavily on scholarly excellence and especially emphasized teaching curriculum to prepare lawyers to be practice ready. Additionally, he realized the importance of creating a bar preparation program to help graduates excel on the exam. Due to the implementation of the bar prep program, Duquesne Kline School of Law for more than a decade has consistently

outperformed state and national averages in first-time bar passage.

These pursuits raised the visibility of both the School of Law and Gormley's profile. He was highly respected within the Law School, the University, and amongst academic peers and scholars. When Duquesne President Charles Dougherty announced he was stepping down, Gormley seemed like a natural fit. He prevailed in a national search that attracted enormous interest and earned the appointment to steer the helm of

---

**“Effectively, Ken has brought the University unprecedented national recognition and reputation. Ken has a wonderful outreach and network, from community leaders to government officials to donors.”**

---

**FR. JOHN FOGARTY, C.S.SP.,**  
Provincial Superior of the U.S. Province of  
the Congregation of the Holy Spirit

---



the University. Part of why Gormley was chosen was his clear enthusiasm for Duquesne and his tireless work to increase visibility and elevate the School of Law while he was dean.

“He was a great candidate; he had a passion for Duquesne and for students in a way that I think showed everybody he was the right choice. Every insider has an edge, but an outside perspective is useful. But Ken showed this love for Duquesne, and you knew he was always going to try to do that right thing for the University, and he proved that to be true,” said Marie Milie Jones, L’87, who chaired the University Board of Directors and the search committee.

There was a confidence that if Gormley was chosen as president he would continue his vision and advocacy, enhancing the whole University. That confidence proved to be valid, as those who have worked with him can attest. The Honorable Maureen Kelly, L’87—a current member of the Board—has known Gormley for 25 years and said he puts more than 200% into every project he commences.

“For as long as I have known Ken, I have known him to be a person of dynamic energy and vision—always thinking and planning ahead for what is best for the University or the organization that he was working with. At the same time, he is genuinely interested in others and takes time to be present for others,” she said.

Gormley’s foresight has strategically developed the University to stand on a national stage, becoming an academic competitor and an esteemed educational institution.

“Effectively, Ken has brought the University unprecedented national recognition and reputation. Ken has a wonderful outreach and network, from community leaders to government officials to donors. He is driven by a commitment to the University that he cultivated throughout his presidency,”

---

**“I am profoundly grateful to Ken as a mentor and friend. He has been a significant agent of change through his leadership and wisdom.”**

**DEAN APRIL MARA BARTON**

---

said Fr. John Fogarty, C.S.Sp., Provincial Superior of the U.S. Province of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit.

Kelly agrees. “Ken’s biggest impact has been his commitment to heightening the profile of the University on a local, state and national level in terms of academics, athletics and a commitment to the student experience. Obviously, the establishment of the College of Osteopathic Medicine has received considerable attention, but he has been just as dedicated to the enhancement of all the colleges and schools within the University,” she said.

Gormley’s other historic achievements include the \$50 million commitment from prominent trial lawyer Thomas R. Kline, L’78, renaming the Law School and propelling it onto a national stage; the University’s comprehensive IGNITE campaign, surpassing its history-making goal of more than \$333 million—one third of a billion dollars; and countless renovations and upgrades to the University. His leadership guided the University through the COVID-19 pandemic, and his willingness to undertake projects others are hesitant to tackle has yielded stellar results.

“He has a very good and competent leadership team around him, and he is committed to new projects. In a period of declining demographics when other universities and colleges are restricting projects, he has done the opposite and taken courageous steps to initiate new projects with direction. He generates enthusiasm and commitment throughout the entire University,” said Fogarty.

Gormley chose to step down now with the University—including the Law School—in a strong and favorable

position. When he moved from his role as dean to assume the Presidency, Gormley made the historic appointment of alumna Maureen Lally-Green to be the first female dean of the School. Her work pursuing Gormley’s vision then placed Duquesne Kline School of Law in a strong position to attract a vibrant external dean who could carry out and build upon his ambitious vision. Gormley found that person in Dean April Barton, then associate dean at Villanova Law School. She has continued to cultivate his concepts while carving a robust plan for the Law School’s future. Duquesne Kline School of Law has risen in reputation and rankings under her guidance and is poised well for the future.

“I am profoundly grateful to Ken as a mentor and friend. He has been a significant agent of change through his leadership and wisdom. We are all thankful to him for his generosity of spirit and the positive impact he has had on our University and students. I am looking forward to celebrating his incomparable legacy,” said Barton.

After he steps down as President in July 2026, Gormley will serve as Chancellor, a position only several past presidents have been asked by the Board to occupy. In this role, he will continue to work on alumni outreach, maintain relationships with foundation leaders and government officials, and work on special projects in collaboration with the new President. The most recent Chancellor in Duquesne history was former President John E. Murray, Jr., who was also a former Law School dean and long-time mentor to Gormley. ■



For more information on President Gormley’s announcement, visit: [duq.edu/GormleySteppingDown](https://duq.edu/GormleySteppingDown)



# Paralegal Prominence

## Sterling reputation, Accreditation and Flexibility Draw Students to Paralegal Institute

By Amanda S. Drumm

For the past 30 years, the Paralegal Institute at the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University has graduated more than 2,000 paralegals. These professionals support lawyers by performing important legal functions, such as case management and legal research. The quality education they receive empowers them and prepares them to perform critical functions in legal firms and other industries.

“While the majority of our graduates go on to that traditional role as paralegals in law firms, we also see many graduates take what they are learning on alternative paths, including government agencies, legal investigating, eDiscovery roles, banking, compliance and insurance,” said Mary Olson, director of the Paralegal Institute and a 2015 graduate of the institute.

The paralegal certificate may be earned two ways, through a part-time evening program ideally finished in 10 to 18 months or through the intensive summer program that takes 11 weeks.

Whichever path students take, the entire format is online.

“It started with COVID and never went back. For this program, the advantages of an online format clearly outweigh the drawbacks. It just works,” said Olson.

Courses have synchronous components held via Zoom. Some instructors also incorporate asynchronous components. The online format ensures flexibility, helping to accommodate busy student schedules, but also provides help to ensure faculty and staff are interacting regularly.

“It has brought some great advantages to students to have the increased flexibility of scheduling and accessing classes from any location. They don’t have to pay for Pittsburgh parking, and the program is now accessible to students across the country,” Olson said.

### Increased access

The move to complete online instruction has opened the potential for paralegal certification to more people, directly aligning with the mission of providing access to education.

“The real focus is empowerment. Education is that path to empowerment. This high-quality access in this flexible format allows us to meet our students where they are and allows them to better their situations,” said Tara Willke, associate dean for strategic academic programs and associate professor of law. Flexibility, coupled with instructor availability and interaction, are described as search characteristics for prospective paralegal students, and Duquesne Kline School of Law’s Paralegal Institute meets those requirements.

“I wanted to get the certification. I liked the program; I liked Duquesne Kline and that there are instructors. It wasn’t going to be an online program without interaction. I liked the idea that there was some interaction with instruction. It was also one of the only accredited





**“The real focus is empowerment. Education is that path to empowerment. This high-quality access in this flexible format allows us to meet our students where they are and allows them to better their situations.”**

**– TARA WILLKE**

programs,” said Dana Thomas, who worked at a manufacturing company while earning her certificate. She completed the program last March.

#### **Excellent Reputation and Accreditation**

Students who earn a Duquesne Kline School of Law paralegal certificate receive a practical education that is accredited by the American Bar Association. That ABA accreditation is another key characteristic that makes Duquesne Kline School of Law’s paralegal certification appealing.

“The name Duquesne Kline was important to me, and I was elated to get in. Anybody who is anybody in the Pittsburgh area knows Duquesne,” said Nicole Purdy, who earned her certificate this spring. “Another reason I chose Duquesne Kline is that it is an ABA accredited program. I looked at other places around and a lot of them are

not accredited; that makes a world of difference.”

The ABA accreditation is a mark of excellence and has certain ongoing standards and expectations that need to be met to gain and maintain accreditation.

“The quality of the education and the focus on ensuring there are opportunities for people is part of the accreditation. We track every graduate for six months to see where they are working. We assess the program every year to see whether it meets goals and objectives. We observe faculty, give course evaluations and ensure certain learning standards are met. It ensures quality,” said Willke.

Caden Moran, a 2023 graduate of the full-time program, was interested in Duquesne Kline for the certificate’s ABA accreditation and its well-known superior standing.

“I had heard good things about it. I knew someone who works at Duquesne, and she said they have a great reputation and that it is one of the best paralegal programs in the country,” he said.

Moran credits his current paralegal position at Ciprani & Werner PC to the fact that his paralegal certification is from Duquesne Kline School of Law.

“I got this job mainly because of my certification from Duquesne Kline. I didn’t realize before how important it was to have that certificate, to be certified,” he said.

#### **Continued Quality Education**

“Duquesne Kline has a stellar reputation as a law school. I received a top-notch education and had great professors. I’m really pleased with

the education in my classes; they were relatively small and were taught by actual attorneys who were very knowledgeable and have been in the field for a long time. The classes were a good mix of theory and practicality,” Thomas said.

Duquesne Kline School of Law is committed to the growth of the Paralegal Institute and the continuation of providing high-quality access to education. One way is by delivering more internship possibilities to students to enhance the education’s practical experience.

“We hope to focus on more hands-on training for the students, particularly by growing the internship program. Essentially, students can gain networking opportunities through internships. It sets them up for success,” Olson said.

Continuing the mission of helping students navigate the pathway to success is maybe the biggest motivating factor for Willke and Olson.

“As someone who was raised by people who did not go to college, I didn’t know what a paralegal was. Here, I am committed to ensuring access to education— it makes such a difference in people’s lives. That is why I do what I do, to see that one person fulfill goals and realize potential. People did that for me, and I want to keep doing that for others,” Willke said.

Olson agreed. “Every person deserves dignity, respect and grace,” she said. “This program—with its part-time and full-time options and online modality— provides new opportunities for working adults seeking to find their purpose and contribute in a meaningful way.” ■



# BOB DYLAN:

## Music, Lyrics and the Law

featuring the songs of Bob Dylan

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY  
THOMAS R. KLINE  
SCHOOL OF LAW  
CENTER  
EDUCATION

# Hitting the Right Note

By Amanda S. Drumm

More than 250 judges and lawyers filled The Power Center ballroom on April 22 for Bob Dylan: Music, Lyrics, and the Law. The free Continuing Judicial Education (CJE) and Continuing Legal Education (CLE) program was led by Thomas R. Kline, L'78, nationally renowned trial lawyer, and his son, Zac Kline, playwright and lawyer, who also wrote the program.

"Writing and performing the CLE/CJE alongside my dad was a brilliant opportunity to share our mutual 25-year love of Bob Dylan, entertain and educate the Duquesne Kline and Pittsburgh legal community and work with local artists. What a great way to enjoy the intersection between pop culture and the law," said Zac.

A live band—two if its members graduates of Duquesne's Mary Pappert School of Music—kicked off the event playing songs by Bob Dylan while guests enjoyed lunch. Attendees were even treated to Bob Dylan's mom's famous chocolate chip banana loaf recipe, carefully recreated by Parkhurst Dining.

After lunch, the Klines, who have attended more than 100 Dylan concerts across six countries and three continents, shared expertise and extensive knowledge of the topic.

"The audience was mesmerized by the music and equally engaged by the subject matter," said Duquesne President Ken Gormley. "Tom and Zac gave a fantastic, educational, and entertaining lecture."

The duo analyzed Dylan's themes in relation to justice, morality, truth, and social justice, all of which were considered

through an ethical and legal framework. The program was grounded in the law but was rich with artistic expression, with the band playing a major role throughout the program, supporting the presentation by the Klines.

"The program offered a distinctive opportunity to examine legal concepts through the lens of one of America's most influential songwriters," said Dean April Barton.

The CLE and CJE was presented by the Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education of the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University. "It was such an honor to host this one-of-a-kind program that bridged law and culture through the music of Bob Dylan," said Erin Karsman, executive director of the Kline Center, Appellate Moot Court program director, and adjunct professor. She added, "The event was a tremendous success and reflected the Center's commitment to providing innovative, interdisciplinary, and high-quality programming."

Tom is grateful to the Center and enjoyed bringing this subject to the wider community. He said, "It was a phenomenal day all thanks to the great folks at The Kline Center for Judicial Education, The Thomas R. Kline School of Law, and our terrific band to bring Bob Dylan: Music, Lyrics and The Law to The Power Center. We were humbled and delighted to share our special connection to Bob Dylan with lawyers, judges and students. We hope attendees walked away with a smile on their face and a new appreciation for the depth of the work of Bob Dylan." ■



# Tribone Center for Clinical Legal Education Updates



## Welcome Rebecca Edmiston

### Adjunct Professor and Externship Supervising Attorney Rebecca Edmiston

We welcome Rebecca Edmiston, L'18. Since graduating, she practiced dependency and education law at KidsVoice and served as Duquesne Kline School of Law's assistant director of career services. Currently, she practices family law for a domestic violence organization and is thrilled to return to Duquesne Kline School of Law as a part-time externship supervisor and adjunct professor.

## Tribone Center in the Community Elder Law Project

Duquesne Kline School of Law students in the Elder Law Project (ELP) work under the supervision of attorney-professors Catherine Martin and Jaime Latronica at the Neighborhood Legal Services Association offices, assisting older citizens in Allegheny County with senior legal issues. The ELP also assisted elderly community members during several community service workshops in February and March. On Feb. 14 and 21, the ELP was at Vintage Senior Center, a service of FamilyLinks, in East Liberty, assisting with habitability issues while renting, grandparent custody issues, and powers of attorney and ADs. On Feb. 10, the ELP had a presentation at the Homewood Senior Center on avoiding financial exploitation. On March 14 and 21, the ELP hosted workshops at the Greenfield HAL Center on avoiding financial exploitation and AD/POAs. On March 14 and 28, the ELP hosted workshops at the Macedonia FACE (Family and Community Enrichment Center) at the Thelma Lovette YMCA on avoiding financial exploitation and AD/POAs.

## Wills and Healthcare Decisions Clinic

During the 2024-2025 school year, the Wills and Healthcare Decisions Clinic organized several community legal service events, providing students with hands-on opportunities to support local residents by preparing wills and powers of attorney. The clinic returned to Life Pittsburgh McKees Rocks adult day care center in the fall and spring to offer estate and incapacity planning services. In collaboration with Lawrenceville United and Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania, the clinic hosted an estate planning event in Lawrenceville in the fall.

Expanding its outreach beyond Allegheny County, the clinic partnered with the Butler County Area Agency on Aging and the Pennsylvania Bar Association in the fall to host a wills clinic

in Butler County. In April, the clinic teamed up with Duquesne University's Center for Integrative Health and offered a wills clinic at the Spartan Community Center of the Hazelwood Food Pantry. These events, organized in partnership with local community organizations, provide full-day power of attorney clinics where individuals can meet with law students (supervised by an attorney) to have essential legal documents prepared.

To cap off the academic year, students will collaborate with the City of Bridges Community Land Trust to present on the importance of estate planning, focusing on how it helps preserve assets, secure real estate and support generational wealth. As part of its outreach to older adults, the clinic is also organizing an Elder Justice Fair at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh in Oakland. The fair will feature legal aid and senior service providers specializing in services for older adults. This event aims to break down barriers to justice by bringing together a range of resources in a single, accessible location. Open to the public, it offers a valuable opportunity for individuals to learn about legal resources available to seniors in the community.

## Re-Entry Legal Services Clinic

This semester, the Re-Entry Clinic plans to attend an event at the Kingsley Association discussing life after conviction. While at the event, students will advise attendees on their eligibility for pardons, expungements, and automatic or petition sealing.

## Pennsylvania Innocence Project

On Jan. 30, Professor Elizabeth DeLosa, supervising attorney, gave a presentation at the University of Pittsburgh Non-Profit and Government Career Panel and on Feb. 5 was a guest lecturer at the Duquesne University School of Nursing's Josiah Macy Faculty Scholars Program.



## Student Highlights

### Family Law: By Allison Kindred

“Like many of my peers, I decided to pursue a legal career because I want to help people. Although it sounds simple at face value, truly helping someone requires developing a familiarity with their situation as a whole, not just identifying and remedying a legal issue. Compassionate lawyering means issue spotting backwards. My clients at the Family Law Clinic often want a specific legal outcome and they’d like me to draft the specific legal document to achieve it. It is adequate lawyering to type up the form, sign on the line and send them on their way. It is good lawyering to actually discuss the client’s personal goals with them and assess how the legal system may or may not be able to help them achieve those goals. Often at the clinic, the root of the client’s conflict isn’t legal at all. Sometimes, filing that document would lead to a harmful outcome rather than a helpful one. Advocacy requires approaching your client as you would a member of your community who is experiencing hardship, because first and foremost, that’s what they are.”

### Extern Nicole Norman

“As a second-year evening student, I took the Immigration Law course where Professor Samantha Tamburro, L’16, a local immigration attorney at Rogers Tamburro, quickly inspired me to follow in her footsteps. The following semester, I worked as an extern with Attorney Tamburro which solidified my aspirations to practice immigration law. This opportunity provided hands-on experience in advocacy for clients who had overcome immense trauma to seek refuge in the United States. Attorney Tamburro subsequently connected me to a public defender in the Immigration Consequences Group, which led to my placement for an externship working in crimmigration. These externships empowered me to represent clients in immigration proceedings and in cases where immigration law intersects with family and criminal law. Attorney Tamburro’s ongoing support and mentorship have undoubtedly shaped the trajectory of my legal career. The knowledge and skills I acquired through these externships ultimately led to successfully securing employment with a Pittsburgh immigration law firm, where I will work as an attorney upon passing the bar,” said extern Nicole Norman. ■

**“As an evening student, I took the Immigration Law course where Professor Samantha Tamburro, L’16, a local immigration attorney at Rogers Tamburro, quickly inspired me to follow in her footsteps.”**

**– NICOLE NORMAN, 3E**





# Young Alumni

## PROFILE

### Kathryn Valentine, L'22

#### Hometown:

Saxonburg, Pa.

#### Education:

Penn State Schreyer Honors College, bachelor's degree in chemical engineering (Class of 2017)

Duquesne Kline School of Law, J.D. (Class of 2022)

#### What are you currently reading:

*James by Percival Everett*

#### Words you live by:

There is no substitute for hard work.

#### What might people be surprised to know about you?

We recently adopted a rescue cat from Kuwait. She is a Scottish Fold named Nessie.

#### Employment History and Current Employment:

After getting my engineering degree, I worked for an oil and gas company as an engineer for a few years. I joined Dinsmore & Shohl's Pittsburgh office after law school as a patent prosecution attorney. In July of 2024, I pivoted to in-house IP counsel for Vishay Intertechnology Inc.

#### What sparked your interest in becoming a patent lawyer?

When I was an undergrad, I was supposed to spend my sophomore summer doing research in a lab. A few weeks before the semester ended, I saw a job advertisement for a legal intern at a company near my hometown. To my surprise, I landed the job and found myself switching the lab coat for legal notebooks. The attorney who brought me on board quickly became more than just a boss; she became a mentor. She introduced me to so many lawyers with different practices—including patent law. Almost instantly I knew patent law was the right fit for me. Not too long after, my mentor encouraged me to go to law school, and the rest is history!

#### How have your previous experiences prepared you for your role today?

Engineering in general has been instrumental in shaping my approach to the legal profession. The skills I gained in precision, logic and attention to detail transferred seamlessly to law. In addition to the technical skills, my experiences in industry taught me the value of learning from others, regardless of their position or title. I worked alongside some technicians who had 40 years of experience and a wealth of knowledge beyond what I had as a junior engineer. Their expertise reinforced the principle that valuable lessons can come from anyone, no matter their level of seniority.

#### How did your Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University education prepare you for practice as a patent lawyer in a firm and as in-house counsel?

Overall, the combination of coursework, hands-on experiences and mentorship equipped me with the tools needed for effective practice. Courses like Patent Law provided important foundational knowledge, and the faculty's extensive experience in both law firm and in-house roles gave me valuable insights and realistic expectations for my career. It was a great blend of academic and experiential learning.



#### Looking back, how did your time at Duquesne Kline School of Law shape your career and approach to the legal profession?

Being in the heart of Pittsburgh for law school provided unique opportunities to grow my network with professionals who I now regularly practice with. The cordiality and willingness of alumni to mentor law students instilled a sense of pride in being a Duquesne-trained lawyer. These relationships, coupled with the strong connections fostered by the school between its location and alumni network, equipped me with a supportive community and invaluable guidance—and I am happy to talk to any law students to pay it forward!

#### How would you describe the value of a Duquesne Kline School of Law education in the 21st century?

Duquesne truly provides an invaluable experience to connect to the legal community in the city of Pittsburgh. Having a law school in the heart of downtown Pittsburgh with a strong alumni network (including many, many judges) provides an excellent opportunity for students to become practice-ready lawyers. As a student, you gain an understanding of what practicing law is really like, whether it is through professors, adjunct faculty, clinics or school-sponsored events.

#### Is there any additional information you would like to share about yourself?

My husband and I are expecting our first baby in July. It's been quite a whirlwind over the past six years—from starting law school to starting a family. I am grateful for every minute of it.

#### The legal landscape is constantly evolving. What do you see as the biggest challenge or opportunity facing lawyers today?

I think AI is going to be transformative in both good and bad ways. AI can help attorneys save time and track consistency. However, we have a responsibility to ensure that we are using these incredible tools in a manner that complies with our ethical responsibilities.

#### What advice would you give to young lawyers and law students who want to follow in your footsteps?

Don't be afraid to reach out and connect with practicing attorneys! Talking to lawyers revealed so many interesting areas of law to me—and it helped me settle on patent law. You can learn so much from someone by asking about their work, and it might lead you to a career you never thought of. ■





## Alumni Profile

# Alka Patel, L'01

### Hometown:

Grew up in Scott Township (South Hills) of Pittsburgh

### Education:

Duquesne Kline School of Law

Juris Doctor (evening program)

Master of Business Administration (joint JD/MBA program)

University Of Pittsburgh

Bachelor of Science—Materials Science & Engineering

### What are you currently reading:

In between all the executive orders coming out (!!!), reading: *House of Huawei: The Secret History of China's Most Powerful Company*, by Eva Dou

### Words you live by:

I can't take credit for this phrase, but it's a great reminder when things don't happen according to plan or turn out the way we want: "Rejection

is redirection." Often we have a plan in our minds as to what or how things should happen (especially for those of us crazy Type A folks!). But change and adversity are inevitable. Success is not defined by what happens to you outside of your control. Rather, it is how you respond and react that determines whether you are a success.

### What might people be surprised to know about you:

My first job out of undergrad was at Latrobe Steel where I worked on the plant floor as a process metallurgist. I led the efforts at the U.S. Department of Defense Joint AI Center (start up within DoD) adoption for the AI Ethics principles in 2020—this became the roadmap for the international military community to follow. I participated in a CSpan briefing with a 3-star general.

### Employment history and current employment:

I've had the privilege of working across a number of industries from the private sector, to government, to academia, and while I started my career with a tech focus (engineering/IP attorney) I eventually gravitated towards positions that allowed me to create and lead in uncharted spaces.

Started out as metallurgical engineer, went to night school at Duquesne for law degree and then MBA; was in private practice for about 10 years as a patent/intellectual property attorney; then went in house to BNY Mellon (at the time, now BNY) as a transactional/commercial attorney; after five years, left practice of law and went to Carnegie Mellon University to lead/start up a Digital Transformation Innovation Center sponsored by Pricewater House Coopers—the center was focused on AI, data analytics, cybersecurity to solve business problems with a focus on risk management; it was during that time, I realized that the conversation around AI ethics resonated both from a technical perspective but also from an advocacy perspective (lawyer in me coming out!)—I pursued a role in that space and landed at the U.S. Department of Defense, Joint AI Center (now the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Office), holding the first full time federal role on AI ethics; returned to Pittsburgh to take on the role of Regional VP Government and Community Affairs at Comcast, Keystone Region—as my work in the technology space continued, what became more and more apparent is the impact of the digital divide—areas (not just rural), where internet access was not accessible, affordable, adopted, etc. Communities cannot harness the positive aspects of technology or participate in a digital world unless they are connected, and my time at Comcast allowed me to have a role on the grassroots level local/state to help make a difference. After Comcast, I had an opportunity to return to DC at the newly formed Cyberspace and Digital Policy Bureau at the U.S. Department of State to lead a newly formed team on technology security/strategy—my role there brought together the confluence of the various areas I've worked on over my career—a focus on international issues focused on policy making on information critical infrastructure/ ICT (telecommunications, undersea cables, satellites, etc.), data digital policy (digital trade, data privacy, trusted government access, cross border privacy, etc.), tech governance (AI, data, etc.), ICT supply chain security, travelling and speaking on these issues internationally, leading foreign delegations on these issues in DC, working across federal agencies on these issues (Commerce, DHS, etc.) and the White House,



---

as well as engaging in international forums such as the OECD, etc. This past year led an international convening with the White House on connected vehicles as well as an international event at the United Nations General Assembly in New York where my team led the New York Koin Statement on the Security and Resilience of Undersea Cables.

### **What sparked your interest in the intersection between the law and technology?**

I think the interest was fluid. When I was younger I loved trying to solve problems and discover how things work. As I got older and more involved and engaged in my community, I wanted to take it to the next step: not only figure out how systems and processes work, but then take that understanding and use it for the betterment of others and the community. Advocating for people, policies, etc. that can make things better for others became my passion. The intersection of law and technology allows me to bring both of those concepts together—I love being part of technical innovations (using my left brain) and influencing the development of emerging technologies in such a way that they are used for the development, betterment, and empowerment of people and communities (using my right brain).

### **How did your Duquesne Kline School of Law education prepare you for your current role in technology strategy and policy?**

My law degree has been instrumental and foundational through my career as I made the shift in legal roles as well as into the policy space over the last number of years. The fundamental skills of issue spotting, asking questions to get to the fact/root cause, and mediation/finding the common ground or the opportunities in the grey space are used on a daily basis.

Additionally, the content of classes was instrumental in critical areas that shape how we think about risk management and governance in a digital and technological world.

### **Looking back, how did your time at Duquesne Kline School of Law shape your career and approach to the legal profession?**

The Law School network has been instrumental in my career. Being new to the legal profession, I did not have role models or a community to engage with to ask about career paths, opportunities, next steps, etc. The Law School faculty and leadership (across the entire school) were always welcoming and open to engaging and supportive through my Law School years and beyond. Having that accessible community and support system provided the confidence needed to leap into an unknown profession!

### **How would you describe the value of a Duquesne Kline School of Law education in the 21st century?**

Well rounded. As shared, I attended the evening program, which to some may be non-traditional but I personally found beneficial. That afforded me the opportunity to be able to go to law school while continuing to work. Having other experienced, working professionals across various industries as classmates is a valuable asset provided by the evening program that can be easily overlooked. In addition to

the quality of instruction, there is tremendous value in the network of professionals and Duquesne reputation you carry with you throughout your career.

### **Is there anything additional you would like to share about yourself?**

I've always felt it was important to give back to my community, and have sat on many non-profit boards, as well as other boards where I advise C-suite individual and foreign leaders on a variety of topics including technology, risk management, governance, compliance and audit. I'm also a frequent speaker on the topics of diversity, women's leadership, techdiplomacy and responsible AI. I am a prior Chartiers Valley school director, which was a full circle moment as I graduated from the high school! I live with my husband, three teen kids and our bernedoodle!

### **The legal landscape is constantly evolving. What do you see as the biggest challenge or opportunity facing lawyers today?**

I think there are several significant challenges, centered around the role of technology (not just AI, but mis/disinformation, deep fakes, etc.). First, we are in an age where the pace of technology is changing so rapidly that the law is often not able to keep up—not to mention that lawyers, judges, etc. have to keep up with these technological advancements. This can lead to unpredictable and counterintuitive interpretations and applications of the law. Second, advances in artificial intelligence are starting to disrupt every industry, and the legal profession is not immune. Future generations of lawyers will have to learn not only how to effectively utilize the power of AI, but also to compete against it as the capabilities of AI expand.

We are also in a time where our lawyers and legal system will be playing a prominent role for society and government. On an international basis, my role plays a part in helping developing countries establish rule of law; but at the same time we can't lose focus on what the rule of law means at home. And I believe going forward (whether in this current political environment or otherwise) it will require intentional vigilance.

### **What advice would you give to young lawyers and law students who want to follow in your footsteps?**

I would say, "Find what you love doing or get excited about and then just do it!" There is no rule book anymore, no singular path. In fact, many possibilities and jobs you are likely to encounter in the legal profession haven't been defined yet! Plan for your future, but be ready to quickly adjust and pivot not only to changes in the world around you, but also as your own goals change (which for me personally have changed over the course of my personal and professional career). Don't fixate on what others think you should do, and be willing to put yourself out there and take on measured risks. If you stay current with emerging trends in the law and technology, there will always be a path you can carve out for yourself and/or step into! I truly believe that lawyers will be the leaders for this new uncharted digital/technological world we are living in! ■



# ClassActions

Stay connected with Duquesne Kline Law!  
Send us your accomplishments, news you would like to share and updates to your contact information at [lawalumni@duq.edu](mailto:lawalumni@duq.edu).

## 1962

**Peter Vaira's** recently published book, *Laughing at the Law: Stories of Mergers, Super Lawyers ... and the Last Solo Practitioner*, is listed for sale on Amazon.

## 1968

**John (Jack) McGinley** received the Joseph F. Weis, Jr. Distinguished Service Award from the Academy of Trial Lawyers of Allegheny County.

## 1974

**David S. Pollock** has announced his retirement after an extraordinary 50-year career dedicated to the practice of law. This milestone is a testament to his remarkable commitment, passion and unwavering dedication to the legal profession and the families he has served throughout the decades.



## 1980

**Kenneth Horoho** has been reappointed by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to serve a second term as Vice Chair of its Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee.



## 1981

**Bill Clifford** was honored with the Allegheny County Bar Foundation's Kathryn M. Kenyon Leadership Award for his commitment to pro bono service—as a volunteer, active supporter of the partnership's administrative board, project coordinator, mentor, trainer and visionary for pro bono service in our community. He was also the winner of the ACBA Construction Law Section's 2024 Construction Law Achievement Award.

## 1982

**Mark Fatla** recently retired after a 30-year career in community development and nonprofit management. In March 2025 he published his second book *Pittsburgh's Historic Stadiums and Arenas* with Arcadia Press.

**James W. Saxton**, CEO of Saxton & Stump, has been named to the *Central Penn Business Journal's* (CPBJ) 2025 "Icon Honors" list, recognizing his decades of leadership, business success and service to the community.



## 1985

**Paul J. Gitnik** was renominated by Gov. Josh Shapiro and unanimously confirmed by the Pennsylvania Senate Nov. 13 as a member of the Board of Finance and Revenue, for a term that expires Jan. 1, 2030. The Board of Finance and Revenue is an independent administrative tax tribunal responsible for the second and final level of administrative assessment and refund appeals in Pennsylvania.



## 1986

**Michael Victor** was named President Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Erie County Community College of Pennsylvania.

## 1988

**Joseph H. Bucci** has joined Knox Law. He focuses his practice on commercial litigation, with an emphasis on the construction industry.

## 1992

**Amy Dolan Strano**, President of the Achieva Family Trust, was named a 2024 Pittsburgh Smart 50 Awardee. The Pittsburgh Smart 50 Awards recognize the top executives of the 50 smartest companies in the Greater Pittsburgh region for their ability to effectively build and lead successful organizations.

## 1993

**William Copetas** has joined Rawle & Henderson LLP in the firm's Pittsburgh office. He joins as Of Counsel, and will represent insurance carriers, employers, third party administrators and self-insured entities in workers' compensation cases throughout Pennsylvania.



## 1995

**Alison Smith** has been elected as a fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC). This prestigious honor recognizes her demonstration of the highest level of integrity, commitment to the profession, competence and experience as a trust and estate counselor.

**Christopher Soller** has started a new role as a Partner at McGuireWoods.

## 1996

**Lisa Petrucci** has joined the partnership as an income Partner at Meyer, Unkovic & Scott LLP. She has 28 years of experience in handling a broad range family law issues.

**Simquita Bridges** was appointed a Judge to the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas.

## 1997

**Melissa Tea** was recognized at the *Pittsburgh Business Times* C-suite Awards. The ceremony recognizes C-suite executives who have demonstrated vital leadership and business savvy to guide their companies

to success. C-suite executives play a crucial role in executing a company's mission in a rapidly changing environment. Skill, agility and commitment are just some of the traits necessary to recognize opportunity, identify and manage risk, achieve profitable growth, and lead in times of prosperity and crisis.

## 1998

**Annabelle Carone** has been promoted to Partner at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote. She concentrates her practice on defending companies in product liability actions. She handles all aspects of civil litigation, including research and writing, discovery, depositions, motions practice and trial as both national and regional counsel for large corporations.

## 1999

**John Lasky** has joined New York City-based Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) Cancer Center as Chief People Officer. MSK is one of 72 National Cancer Institute-Designated Cancer Centers.

## 2000

**Terry Scott** started a new role at Boulay as a Tax Manager. He joins Boulay with more than 24 years of estate and trust experience. He reviews trust, estate and gift tax returns and assists with tax compliance and planning. He has extensive experience working in fiduciary, corporate, partnership and individual taxation.

## 2001

**John Demas** has been promoted to Partner at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote. He serves as co-chair of the firm's Family Law Group. He concentrates his practice in the areas of family law and sports law. In addition to maintaining a traditional legal practice, he is experienced in alternative dispute resolution methods, including mediation and collaborative law.



## 2002

**Tony A. Comas** has been promoted to Member at Burns White, concentrating his practice on Medicare compliance. In addition, he has a background in workers' compensation defense.

**Michael Gianantonio** has become the Owner at AMG Law, LLC.

## 2003

**Douglas C. Hart** has been promoted to Member of Burns White, practicing in the firm's Litigation Group. An experienced trial attorney, he has a broad-reaching litigation practice, handling commercial litigation, employment, real estate, construction, family law and health care-related matters.

## 2006

**Jaques Moye** was selected to receive a \$16,000 scholarship to attend the Advanced Leadership Institute's Executive Leadership Academy, designed for Black leaders from the Greater Pittsburgh region with demonstrated leadership and a desire to achieve professional excellence.

## 2008

**Katie Charlton** has been appointed as Secretary-Treasurer of the Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association Executive Committee.

## 2009

**Allison Sizemore** was selected for the *Pittsburgh Magazine* 40 under 40 class of 2024. This list recognizes outstanding individuals under the age of 40 whose creativity, vision and passion enrich the Pittsburgh region.

**Erin Work** has been promoted to Director of the Allegheny County Bar Foundation Juvenile Court Project. She will oversee the daily operations and strategic initiatives.

**Brett Warren** has been named Partner at Leech Tishman. He is a seasoned securities law attorney with 14 years of experience, spanning both the public and private sectors.

## 2010

**Krista Corabi Spence** was promoted to Partner at Summers McDonnell Hudock Guthrie & Rauch PC.

**Brian M. John** has been promoted to Equity Member at Metz Lewis Brodman Must O'Keefe LLC. He is the Practice Group Leader of the firm's Energy Group and a member of the Real Estate and Litigation practice groups.

**Matthew Morphy** started a new position as Director of Compliance at Main Street.

## 2011

**Lauren Creighton** started a new position as Director of Child Welfare for Erie County.

**Melissa S. Grimes** has been promoted to member at Steptoe & Johnson PLLC. She focuses her practice on energy and mineral title law.

**Amanda Kraft** has been promoted to Member of McNeese Wallace & Nurick.



## 2012

**Sarah A. Decker** has been elected Partner at K&L Gates. She is a commercial litigator and strategic business advisor.

**Joshua W. Gallo** has been promoted to member at Steptoe & Johnson PLLC. He practices in the areas of energy law and mineral title law.

**Stephen Guzzetti** has joined Fox Rothschild in Pittsburgh as Partner in the Litigation Department.



**Anthony Pavlick** has been elevated to Shareholder at Tucker Arensberg, P.C., focusing on real estate transactions and energy industry matters.

## 2013

**Christopher Bradley** started a new position as Chief Compliance and Legal Officer at Ingersoll-Rand Federal Credit Union.

**Kushal Davé** has joined Rawle & Henderson LLP. He will defend clients in cases involving commercial motor vehicle accidents, construction, employment relations, insurance coverage, municipal liability and civil rights, as well as environmental toxic and mass torts.



**Jonathan Ehret** was promoted to Senior Director, Legal Services & Risk at Herc Rentals.

**Rachel Klebanoff** started a new position as Associate General Counsel at CareSource.

**William "Billy" Kozich** has been promoted to Partner at Caroselli, Beachler & Coleman, L.L.C. He is a civil litigator and has experience in a wide variety of cases.

**Adam Petrun** has become Member of the firm Cafardi Ferguson + Wyrick. His practice primarily focuses on litigation and real estate/corporate transactional matters.

**Michelle A. Ross** has been elected Partner at Leech Tishman.

## 2014

**Katherine Beers** became a proud new mother and started a new role as Senior Counsel at PlaneSense, Inc.

**Daniel Conlon** received the 2024 Hospitality Industry Supporter Award from the Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association.

**Megan A. DelVecchio** was promoted to Partner at Pollock Begg.



**Jesse Drumm** started a new position as an attorney at Morgan & Morgan, PA.

**Samuel Marchese** started a new position as Head of Rent Regulatory Division at Burgher Gray LLP.

**James Mazzocco** was named a Shareholder of Babst Calland. He is a member of the Litigation and Environmental groups, and his practice focuses on environmental and complex commercial litigation.

**Jared Oberweis** started a new position as Shareholder at Hinkle Prior Fischer & Oberweis, P.C. He concentrates in estate and trust matters, guardianships and adult services.

**Ali Parker** was elected to the Board of Directors of Make-A-Wish Greater Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

## 2015

**Nathaniel J. Boring** was promoted to Shareholder of Sherrard, German & Kelly, P.C. He is a member of the firm's Real Estate and Energy and Natural Resources practice areas. His practice focuses on zoning, land use, solar energy and all aspects of local governance.



**Theo A. Collins** started a new position as Senior Director, Strategic & Commercial Relationships Counsel at SEI.

**Lindsay Fouse-Hopkins** was promoted to Member at Clark Hill Law.

**Ryan O'Shaughnessy** was promoted to Director and Senior Commercial Counsel at Eaton.

**Jonathan Smith** started a new role as a Private Client Advisor for Bank of America Private Bank. He is part of the team that will be opening the Pittsburgh office.

**Daniel Sodroski** became a Partner at Gerstman PLLC, bringing experience as a seasoned commercial real estate lawyer.

**Aaron Weiss** was promoted to Shareholder at Zimmer Kunz, PLLC. He has been with Zimmer Kunz since graduation and practices in civil litigation, commercial litigation and employment law. He also founded the firm's brewery and alcohol practice. He has been named a *Pennsylvania Super Lawyers* Rising Star for the past three years.





**Michael Winsko** was promoted to Shareholder at Marshall Dennehey. He is now a shareholder in the Casualty Department whose practice focuses on the defense of corporations, individuals and local governments in complex civil litigation matters.

## 2016

**Thomas Cocchi** became President of the Saint Vincent College Alumni Council.

**Danielle Donovan** started a new position as an attorney at Mears & Adams.

**Devon Ferris** was elected Shareholder at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote. She is a member of the firm's Diversity and Inclusion Committee. She concentrates her practice in the areas of admiralty, insurance defense, Jones Act, maritime law and municipal law.

**Justin Leonelli** was elected Partner at K&L Gates. He focuses his practice on strategic counseling and dispute resolution in the areas of construction and engineering, manufacturing and supply, energy (conventional and renewable), and commercial disputes.

**Quinn A. McCall** started a new role at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote P.C. He concentrates his practice in civil litigation, general liability, insurance defense, real estate, and oil and gas, with a particular focus on energy law, and is a licensed Pennsylvania Title insurance agent.

**Tynishia Powell** started a new position as Associate at Kane, Pugh, Knoell, Troy & Kramer, LLP.

**Samantha Tamburro** was promoted to Partner at Rogers Tamburro.

**Anna (Robosson) Thompson** started a new position as a Senior Associate at Fragomen, in the new Pittsburgh office.

## 2017

**Kevin Brett** started a new position as Shareholder at Frank, Gale, Bails & Pocrass, P.C.

**Robert Campbell** started a new position as Partner at Gross McGinley, LLP.

**Alyssa Dedola** joined Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti, LLP. She joins the Liability Practice Group in the Pittsburgh office, bringing valuable experience from her previous role at a national law firm, where she focused

on civil litigation, particularly medical malpractice and general liability cases.

**Emily Harlovic** was elevated to Partner at Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani. She is a member of the Commercial Litigation practice. She handles a broad spectrum of commercial litigation matters, with a focus on trucking and transportation litigation, premises liability and products liability.

**Zachary Evans** was promoted to Director at Zimmer Kunz, PLLC. His current practice focuses on civil litigation with experience in both state and federal courts. Additionally, he continues to assist clients with employment, business and estate matters.



**Ian Grecco** was promoted to Shareholder at Tucker Arensberg, P.C. He has expertise in commercial litigation and ERISA matters.

**Benjamin Kift** started a new position as Assistant Region Counsel at Heidelberg Materials North America.

**David Scherer** joined McGrath McCall, P.C. as an Associate Attorney. He focuses on representing financial institutions in connection with commercial loan workouts, creditors' rights matters, foreclosures and debt collection.

**Alison Viola** was promoted to Member at Metz Lewis Brodman Must O'Keefe LLC. She is a highly motivated and dynamic commercial litigator with experience in a broad range of litigation matters.

## 2018

**Jamie Drennen** started a new role at Fifth Third Wealth Advisors as a Relationship Manager, serving clients in the Pittsburgh region and across the country. She provides comprehensive wealth management solutions to high-net-worth individuals and families. Prior to joining the firm, she was an Associate Attorney at a Pittsburgh-based law firm, where she focused on estate planning, trusts and estate administration.

**Kathleen Klapkowski** started a new role as an Associate at Ogletree Deakins focusing on employment law.

**Andreas S. Riedel** was promoted to Of Counsel at Steptoe & Johnson PLLC. She focuses her practice in energy and mineral title law.

**Andrew Yetzer** started a new position as a Staff Attorney at Neighborhood Legal Services.

## 2019

**Jacob Penn** announced the opening of Penn & Webb PLLC, a new law firm dedicated to providing legal services focused on business advising and estate planning.

**Ashley Puchalski** was named Senior Counsel at Tucker Arensberg, P.C., excelling in municipal law, land use, and labor and employment.

**Laura Swinchock** was promoted to Vice President, Human Resources at Towne Park.

**Bridget Synan** started a new role at Leech Tishman.

## 2020

**Brianna Gallagher** was selected for the 2024-2025 Leadership Pittsburgh Emerging Leaders Cohort. The cohort comprises 49 high potential, emerging leaders from across the Pittsburgh region committed to enhancing their leadership capacities and deepening their civic engagement.

**Derrick L. Maultsby** was selected to join the 2025 Class of the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity's Pathfinder Program. The program connects high-potential, early-career diverse attorneys from across the country with foundational leadership skills and relationship-building resources during a seven-month professional development program.

**Katlynn Oliver** started a new position as Associate Attorney at Ament Law Group, PC. She assists clients with estate planning, estate administration, real estate transactions and business matters.

**Christopher Winkler** started a new role at Eckert Seamans.

## 2021

**Jessica Barnes** started a new position as a Real Estate Associate at Reed Smith LLP.

**Hannah French** started a new position as General Attorney at the U.S. Department of Education.

**Jake Harrison** started a new role as an Attorney Advisor (Contract) with the United States Department of the Air Force.

Pennsylvania Super Lawyers honoree **Tristen Mezzacappa** started a new position as Compliance Associate at Balyasny Asset Management L.P.

**Kathryn Olon** started a new position as Associate Attorney at Hardin Thompson PC.

**Julia Siracuse** was recognized as a Fragomen 2024 Pro Bono Champion.

**Dylan Wecht** was promoted to Director of Public Sector Engagement at Truckers Against Trafficking, a national nonprofit organization that mobilizes, educates, equips and empowers key industries and agencies to combat human trafficking.

**Younghun (Brian) Wi** started a new role as Special Victims' Counsel at the U.S. Army JAG Corps.

## 2022

**Stephon Burton** started a new position as an Associate Attorney at Sneaker & Streetwear Legal Services.

**Erin McCluan** announced the launch of McCluan Law, PLLC, a law firm dedicated to representing Pennsylvania's health care professionals in license defense actions before their state boards.

**Alexis Thurston** was selected for the 2024-2025 Leadership Pittsburgh Emerging Leaders Cohort. The cohort comprises 49 high potential, emerging leaders from across the Pittsburgh region committed to enhancing their leadership capacities and deepening their civic engagement.

## 2023

**Nicholas S. Fischer** started a new role at GRB Law.

**River Icenhour** started a new position as an Associate Attorney at Burns White LLC.



**Kristen M. Manuel** joined Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, concentrating her practice in the area of the food and beverage industry. Prior to joining the firm, she practiced at another Pittsburgh law office handling civil litigation matters.

**Taylor Riedel** joined the American Cancer Society Pittsburgh Young Professional Board of Advisors.

2024

**Sydney Croft** joined the Pittsburgh Hub of Quintairos, Prieto, Wood & Boyer, P.A., focusing her practice on commercial litigation, labor and employment, employee benefits compliance, professional liability, and wealth preservation.



**Margaret “Maggie” Ellis** started a new position at Leech Tishman.

**Aubrey M. Milloy** joined Pollock Begg as an Associate Attorney handling a wide range of divorce and custody cases.

**Morgan Null**

joined Steptoe & Johnson PLLC. She focuses her practice on energy and natural resources transactions in the Pittsburgh office.



She was a previous summer associate at Steptoe & Johnson, interned on Capitol Hill and held a judicial internship for United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania. ■

In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness that we list the following law alumni who passed away:

Robert M. Barrett	1975
Alexander P. Bicket	1988
Charles F. Bowers	1990
William J. Brennan	1993
Linda Broker	1988
William Coholan	1984
Thomas D. Hall	1993
Ronald J. Herisko	1967
Jason A. Hines	1999
Lewis E. Linn	1982
Louis B. Loughren	1968
Thomas J. Michael	1979
Richard E. Myers	1967
David Neely	1987
Leone P. Paradise	1977
David L. Ream	1975
Leo M. Stepanian	1994
Stanley Winikoff	1967
James R. Wishchuk	1969

*This list is provided through the Duquesne University Advancement Records Office and may not be complete. If you have information about an alumnus who passed away this past year and is not listed, please contact the Duquesne Kline School of Law Alumni Office at 412.396.5215 so that we may update our records.*



## Alumnae Honored at 33rd Annual Event

Leadership, integrity, service and sacrifice are the highest ideals of the legal profession. Those attributes describe the winners of the 33rd annual awards ceremony celebrating the Woman of the Year and Recent Graduate of the Year.

The packed event was held on March 18 in the Law School's newly renovated student lounge. Alumni, past award recipients and students gathered for the awards ceremony honoring the 2025 award winners, Shreya Desai, L'21, Recent Graduate of the Year Award recipient, and Michelle Mantine, L'06, Woman of the Year Award recipient, who gave speeches.

About awarding the duo, Barton said, "They have demonstrated a profound commitment to actively seeking positive change and expanding legal opportunities within the legal profession. Most importantly, though, Shreya and Michelle



Left: Shreya Desai holds her award.



Right: Michelle Mantine (right) is pictured with Beth Bauer, associate director of law student organizations and international programs.

exemplify the highest ideals of the legal profession and serve as role models to all of us."

Mantine is a partner at Reed Smith and leads its global Antitrust & Competition team. Desai is an assistant district attorney in the Allegheny County District Attorney's Office. ■

## Courthouse Library Renamed for Trailblazer Judge Carol Los Mansmann

The historical legacy of Judge Carol Los Mansmann, L'67, a double Duker, began when she graduated from the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University. She was one of only two women to graduate from Duquesne Kline School of Law that year. Her trailblazing legacy commenced then and continued throughout her extraordinary career.

In 1970, she was the youngest woman in history to argue before the United States Supreme Court, a case that she won. In Allegheny County, she was the first female prosecutor to try a murder case. Mansmann later served as an assistant to the attorney general in Pennsylvania and in private practice. At Duquesne Kline School of Law, she worked as an associate professor from 1974-1983 and as an adjunct professor from 1987-1994. Later, the School of Law named an endowed professorship, the Carol Los Mansmann Chair in Faculty Scholarship, in her honor.

Her career continued its upward trajectory with President Ronald Reagan appointing her to Pittsburgh's federal bench in 1982. Mansmann was the first female attorney to be appointed to the



federal bench in the Western District of Pennsylvania.

In 1985, Mansmann was nominated to the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. She served in that post until her death in 2002 from breast cancer.

Mansmann was a deserving recipient of numerous awards and accolades throughout her life. She received an Honorary Doctorate from Widener University School of Law and an Honorary Doctorate from La Roche College. She was the recipient of the Susan B. Anthony Award by the Women's Bar Association of Western Pennsylvania. She fiercely advocated for equality in the law, and now the Allegheny County Bar Association annually gives the Carol Los Mansmann

Helping Hand Award to an individual who embodies Mansmann's values and dedication to advancing and improving women lawyers' roles in the legal profession.

This past fall, Chief Judge Michael A. Chagares of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit announced that the Third Circuit library located in the Joseph F. Weis, Jr. Courthouse in Pittsburgh was going to be renamed in her honor. A dedication ceremony commemorating the new Mansmann Library was held at the Weis Courthouse on Nov. 14, 2024. Close associates and friends attended the special ceremony, giving speeches in honor of her and remembering the legal force she was.

"Judge Mansmann was a leader who exemplified hard work, dedication and a passion for the rule of law. She was an extraordinary person who had a remarkable legal career. The renaming of the federal courthouse library in her honor is a meaningful way to honor her legacy" said April Barton, dean of Duquesne Kline School of Law. ■



## Baldwin Day Proclaimed in Pittsburgh

The Hon. Cynthia A. Baldwin, L'80, and her husband, Arthur L. Baldwin, were honored Feb. 8 by Allegheny County with the celebratory proclamation of Arthur L. Baldwin and The Honorable Cynthia A. Baldwin Day. According to the proclamation, "both honorees have remained steadfast in their commitment to the communities of McKeesport, White Oak and Pittsburgh—founding initiatives such as the McKeesport Counseling & Tutoring Service to empower disadvantaged youth and inspiring countless individuals through their lifelong dedication; and in recognition of their 80th birthdays and their continued impact on our region." All citizens were encouraged to celebrate the Baldwins' remarkable achievements and lasting legacy. ■

### WILLIAMS RECIPIENT OF THE DRUM MAJOR FOR JUSTICE AWARD

The Hon. Joseph K. Williams, III, L'85,  
received the Drum Major for Justice

Award from the Allegheny County  
Bar Association's Homer S. Brown Division at the bar  
association's annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Prayer  
Breakfast on Jan. 20.



## 1911 Society Fellows and PILA Award Recipients Honored at Annual Reception

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University's 1911 Society Fellows were honored at an annual reception on April 8. The Public Interest Law Association's (PILA) Alumni Award was also presented at this special event.

The 1911 Society Fellows program continues its pledge of excellence by supporting the mission of Duquesne Kline School of Law through cumulative financial support of more than \$10,000. Fellows of the 1911 Society are committed to supporting key initiatives in the Duquesne Kline School of Law; these generous gifts transform the lives of our students and our School of Law.



1911 Society Fellows pose at the event on April 8.

### 2024 FELLOWS:

Honorable Christine L. Donohue, L'80—*Fitzsimons*

In memory of Frank Cecchetti, L'76—*Fitzsimons*

Honorable Maureen P. Kelly, L'87—*Fitzsimons*

Michael F. Nestor, L'80—*Fitzsimons*

James H. Norris, L'78, and Ann Norris—*Fitzsimons*

Frank M. Oliveti, L'84—*Fitzsimons*

Stephen J. Schofield, L'73—*Fitzsimons*

Richard M. Serbin, L'74—*Fitzsimons*

PILA Vice President Hannah Dean (3L) presented the PILA Alumni award to Sr. Suzanne Susany, L'10, at the event. PILA selects one Duquesne Kline School of Law alumnus annually who demonstrates a commitment to the Public Interest Law Association's values and goals through professional and personal conduct and service. Dean highlighted Sr. Susany's pro bono and low bono work and Sr. Susany encouraged her fellow alumni to consider dedicating some of their time to pro bono service. 2024 PILA Fellows who received scholarship awards attended and thanked the Pittsburgh area law firms and alumni who supported this year's PILA scholarship fund. ■

### 1911 SOCIETY FELLOWS WHO ACHIEVED ELEVATED LEVELS OF SUPPORT IN 2024:

Dana Baiocco, L'97—*Rockwell*

Linda V. Hernandez, L'01—*Second Century*

Honorable Terrence F. McVerry, L'68, and Judith M. McVerry, S'66  
—*Second Century*

Brian K. Parker, L'93, and Kimberly Q. Parker—*Second Century*

William C. Ries, L'74—*Hanley*

Michael T. Victor, L'86—*Hanley*



# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

## The Faculty Speak Up

By **Katherine Norton**, Co-Associate Dean for Faculty Scholarship, Director of Clinical and International Programs, and Assistant Professor of Law and, **Richard Heppner**, Co-Associate Dean for Faculty Scholarship and Assistant Professor of Law

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University faculty share their knowledge and expertise with many different audiences in different ways. In addition to writing law review articles, newspaper stories and magazine articles, they appear on TV, radio and podcasts and in person to speak to and with other professors, lawyers and the legal community, and the community. Here is an (inexhaustive) sample of some of the ways faculty members have been making their voices heard recently.

As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to become a regular discussion point in law, Dean **April Barton** shared her knowledge by presenting on several AI-focused panels. She presented at the AI and Law CLE program with Professors Ashley London, Tara Willke, Jacqui Lipton, Kate Norton, Wes Oliver and distinguished alumnus Alan Braverman, L'75. Additionally, she provided the opening keynote session for the National Judicial College program entitled Artificial Intelligence for all Judges and Lawyers.

Associate Professor **Steven Baicker-McKee** presented with Judge William Stickman at the Allegheny County Academy of Trial Lawyers' annual Federal Courts Update program on proposed changes from the Local Rules Advisory Committee (for which Baicker-McKee is the reporter), as well as recent updates and proposed amendments to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Appellate Procedure and Evidence.

The Hon. **Tom Corbett**, Distinguished Executive in Residence, was interviewed numerous times throughout the year, especially during election season, given his significant knowledge about the electoral process and his significant work with the nonpartisan group Keep Our Republic, whose focus is on strengthening trust in elections nationwide. He was interviewed by a variety of news organizations, including MSNBC, *60 Minutes*, CNN, NPR and multiple others.

In addition, he partook in a discussion hosted by the Dauphin County Bar Association at Widener University Commonwealth Law School and spoke at a Philadelphia Bar CLE, presenting on the importance of the Electoral Count Reform Act of 2022 and the important changes it has made to the electoral process throughout the United States since its enactment.

Assistant Professor **Kara Dempsey** presented at The Gault Center's national juvenile defender summit in Denver, Colo., working with attorneys and child advocates to focus on transforming the juvenile justice system, improving youth defense strategy and dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline. She also presented at the James E. Anderson Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice in Harrisburg on the topic "Understanding Systemic Failures Regarding Treatments and Interventions for Children with Disabilities and Mental Health Needs in Schools and Juvenile Court."

Assistant Professor **Maryann Herman** presented "The Short End of the Stick: The Court's Departure From the Bundle-of-Stick Theory" at the Central States

Law Schools Association annual Works-in-Progress Conference and on the New Voices in Property panel at the 2025 annual meeting of the Association of American Law Schools in San Francisco. She discussed her forthcoming paper on the Supreme Court's methods of defining property in regulatory takings cases, and how that definition could affect future takings cases the court may hear.

**David Jamison**, Distinguished Faculty Fellow, co-led a seminar with Professor Shawn Donahue of the University of Buffalo for the Robert H. Jackson Center in Jamestown, N.Y., titled "The Evolution of Rights and Liberties." The seminar was aimed at helping better equip middle school and high school teachers from New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania to address social justice issues in the classroom. By using Justice Jackson's most notable opinions on civil rights and civil liberties during his tenure on the Supreme Court, as well as his participation as chief prosecutor for the U.S. at the Nuremberg Trials, Jamison and Donahue provided the teachers with an understanding of the issues so they can present the material to their students, and some suggestions for classroom activities and special events.

Associate Professor **Rona Kaufman** has been theorizing antisemitism through legal scholarship, including her most recent article, "Blood Libel: The Colonizer Lie," which she presented at UCLA Law School. Over the last year, Kaufman has been presenting her research to diverse audiences including academics, students, teachers, administrators, lawyers, community members and communal leaders around the country. She has been invited to speak by various organizations, including Catholic Jewish Alliance, Stand With Us, Chabad on Campus, Temple Beth Am, Hillel, Students Supporting Israel, Consortium for Interreligious Dialogue, Jewish Emancipation Project, Jewish Family and Children's Services, and Hope for Israel Alliance.

Kaufman developed a series of Israel and antisemitism explainer videos which she shares on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, where they have received more than 2.5 million impressions. She has been featured in the *New York Post*, *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, *Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle*, *Jerusalem Post*, *Hadassah Magazine* and other news outlets. In recent months, she has appeared on Fox News, The Free Press, NBC News and the *America Baby* podcast.

In recognition of her work on antisemitism, Kaufman was selected to be a member of Israeli President Isaac Herzog's Voice of the People Global Council, a think tank focused on solving contemporary challenges facing the Jewish people.



Professor **Bruce Ledewitz** spoke at the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Terrace, a Pittsburgh personal care community run by the Jewish Association on Aging, as he does every few months. Most recently, his talk was devoted to answering questions about the current political and legal situation in Washington.

Ledewitz was interviewed by KDKA News on the subject of cash bail. He explained that requiring cash bail often amounts to unnecessary confinement for the many Americans who cannot access even small amounts of money, and that the real issue is whether certain defendants who either might flee or present a danger to the community should be released on bail at all.

This spring, Ledewitz presented a three-hour CLE titled “Fundamentals of the Pennsylvania Constitution,” which covered the basic structural and rights issues under the Pennsylvania Constitution, the relationship of state constitutional law to federal constitutional law, and the various recent controversies over the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

Associate Professor **Jacqui Lipton** has given several presentations on the increasing importance of data privacy and the comparisons between the European approach and the United States approach, including CLE presentations for the Kline Center for Judicial Education and the Cyril H. Wecht Institute of Forensic Science and Law.

Lipton also continues her work on demystifying publishing law for authors and other creative artists. She gave presentations on copyright and publishing contracts for the Rocky Mountain chapter of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, the Vermont College of Fine Arts (of which she is an alumna), the San Diego Ink organization and the Writing Barn in Austin, Texas.

Assistant Professor and Director of Bar Studies **Ashley London** presented throughout the year at panels relating to lawyering ethics and bar licensing. At the annual Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote CLE held in Pittsburgh, she explored the ethical issues relating to judicial recusal as well as the current and future implications of AI in legal practice. She also addressed the Pennsylvania Board of Governors at its annual meeting on the changing format of the Pennsylvania Bar Exam.

London presented twice at the Association of American Law Schools conference. First, as part of a Hot Topic Program titled “Preparing for the New Age of Bar Licensure: A Guide for Law Schools,” she and other nationally recognized experts in the field of law licensure addressed issues and concerns about the newest iteration of the bar exam. Second, she participated in a discussion group titled “The ABA Reexamines Faculty Employment Security and Status, and the Academy Needs to Pay Attention,” where she advocated for the adoption of long-term contract protections for non-tenure track, clinical and library faculty.

Associate Professor **Eugene D. Mazo** speaks regularly about election law and constitutional law, focusing his presentations on the present and future state of our democracy. He gave a talk called “The Battle for the Ballot in New Jersey” at Princeton University; delivered remarks on “Courts and Democracy: Reflections on the 2024 Election” as part of the Arnold Lecture Series at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock; and presented a paper titled “The Forest and the Leaves: Election Law, Comparative Constitutional Law and the Coupling of Disciplines” at a symposium held at the University of Georgia School of Law in Athens. Mazo's other recent democracy-related activities included a wide-ranging conversation with Professors Richard H. Pildes (New York University School of Law) and Jonathan Adler (Case Western Reserve University School of Law) as part of the 45th John E. Sullivan Lecture at Capital University Law school in Columbus, Ohio, as well as two papers he delivered at the Global Summit on Constitutionalism at the University of Texas at Austin.

Assistant Professor **Marissa Meredith** spoke at the Junior Scholar Conference at Northwestern University School of Law in Boston, where she presented her

ongoing research on the use of music lyrics, particularly in the rap genre, within the criminal legal context, including how they are interpreted and the questions they raise about artistic expression, bias and evidentiary value.

She also presented at the University of Denver, Sturm College of Law on a panel on affirmative action, focusing on the implications of the Supreme Court's decision in *Students for Fair Admissions*, examining the legal and social landscape after the ruling, addressing how institutions adapt, potential challenges in maintaining diversity, and broader consequences for access to education and employment.

Assistant Professor **Brian Miller** also presented at the Junior Scholars Conference in Boston. He spoke about his research on the right to exclude in property law and—drawing on psychological research—about how courts and commentators have misunderstood that right and left open the door for unjust or inefficient land use and wealth allocation.

Associate Professor **Joseph Sabino Mistick**, L'79, given his expertise on election law, is often sought out as a commentator. He has appeared recently on a number of podcasts and radio and television shows, including *Around the Table with Stacy Smith*, *The Rob Pratte Show*, *The Michael Bartley Show*, KDKA Radio interviews and even presenting at the Pittsburgh Playhouse “A Conversation between Joseph Sabino Mistick—*Tribune-Review* Columnist and Brandon McGinley—*Post Gazette* Columnist,” where they discussed the legacy of former County Executive Jim Roddey and the effect of the 2024 election on the region.

In addition, *The Barber of New Kensington*, the short film he produced about barber Frank Costantino, who cut hair until he was 96 years old, which was directed by Tony Buba, aired on the October 2024 season premiere of WQED's *Filmmaker's Corner*.

Assistant Professor and Director of Academic Excellence **Megan Montcalm** participated in a panel discussion at the Association of American Law Schools conference titled “Strangers In Our Classroom: Reconciling Reality with Expectations to Meet Students Where They Are.” She spoke about not only understanding who today's law students are and what they've experienced when they arrive at our classroom doors but also building genuine relationships with them and the importance of offering them explicit instruction on skills for succeeding in their first year of law school.

Professor **Jane Moriarty** spoke about forensic neuroimaging to a class on Law and Neuroscience at the University of Pennsylvania Carey School of Law. She also presented on “Facing the World: The Visibility/Invisibility Conundrum” at the Women's Leadership in Law and Politics Virtual Symposium hosted by The Center for Constitutional Law & The Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron.

Associate Professor **Kate Norton** served as a moderator for the Grefenstette Center Tech Ethics Symposium Panel “AI Policy and the Future of Democracy in Pennsylvania,” discussing the development of policy surrounding AI and its potential impact.

Professor **Wes Oliver** moderated two panels at the Association of American Law Schools conference on legal technology. These discussions covered everything from technology teaching ideas and the future of AI in the profession.

**President Ken Gormley** recently conferred the title of Professor Emerita to Jane Moriarty and the title of Professor Emeritus to Bruce Ledewitz to commence in the 2025-2026 academic year.



## STUDENT BRIEFS

## Uncharted Waters

By Amanda S. Drumm

Growing up in Omaha, Neb., the running joke between the hometown friends of Joe Kelly, 2L, is that he joined the Coast Guard Academy to see the ocean. This quip could not be farther from the truth, though. With a brother who was already commissioned in the Marine Corps, Kelly felt a similar



Joe Kelly, 2L

patriotic call to duty, just through a different military branch.

It was 2011 when Kelly began his tenure at the Coast Guard Academy. “I needed the structure, personally. It certainly made me grow up fast,” he said.

That included Kelly’s time after graduation as a deck watch officer and pursuit mission commander aboard the USCGC RESOLUTE (WMEC-620). As a junior officer, he assisted in ship navigation and led open-ocean, small-boat interdiction enforcement activities in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific. During that duty assignment he met his wife, Rachel. In 2017, he transferred to Maritime Safety and Security Team New York (91106) and served there until 2020.

While living in Brooklyn, N.Y., he gained a plethora of experience. With a commander in chief who was from that city and would visit often at a moment’s notice, the team had to quickly prepare for security duties.

“It was a whirlwind of operations, and thankfully we had a team of some of the hardest working people I’ve ever met. We often provided presidential maritime security, and I had the opportunity to work alongside New York’s finest when providing annual security for United States General Assemblies,” he said.

Kelly additionally provided K9 protection at Superbowl LII, worked with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on the U.S.-Canada border and supported the COVID-19 hospital ship docked in New York City.

He served for eight years after graduating from the Coast Guard Academy, with his most recent job at the Personnel Service Center at the Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C. While there, he found a passion for law and

**“The bar passage rate was a high point; the service expects bar passage on the first try, and Duquesne Kline is right up there. That absolutely drew me in.”**

policy and sought entry into the Coast Guard legal program. In 2026, he will return on assignment, this time as a member of the Coast Guard Judge Advocate General.

He could choose anywhere to attend law school but happily found Duquesne Kline School of Law. He spoke to the now retired Dean of Admissions Maureen Stokan at a law fair and became intrigued.

“I had a conversation with her for over an hour. She is an amazing person and in talking to her I felt a sense of comradery and a family aspect to Duquesne Kline and Pittsburgh,” Kelly said.

He was equally impressed by the high bar passage rate at Duquesne Kline School of Law. “The bar passage rate was a high point; the service expects bar passage on the first try, and Duquesne Kline is right up there. That absolutely drew me in,” Kelly said.

It was additionally important for Kelly to find a place where he and his wife could begin to raise a family, and Pittsburgh fit that bill. Rachel is expecting their first child this summer.

As an active-duty member of the military, Kelly believes in giving back and appreciates the ability to serve veterans in the Duquesne Kline School of Law’s Veterans Clinic.

“The Pittsburgh veteran community is very large, and I hope to take advantage of the opportunities to support. I see members go above and beyond to serve in all the Coast Guard’s 11 statutory missions. Assisting such members post-service is the logical return on investment they deserve. The Veterans Clinic is a great way to serve Pittsburgh,” he said.

Kelly feels he made the correct choice to pursue his legal studies at Duquesne Kline School of Law.

“It’s been a valuable experience that I can’t speak highly enough about,” he said. “I’d like to think I am at an age where I am mature enough to understand the importance of putting forth positive effort to make a successful learning environment. Duquesne Kline does that, and the 2L class is amazing. There is comradery and positivity, and I recognize it and value it.” ■



---

## La Legge con Brio Raises Money for Panucci's Promise

On Feb. 18, the Duquesne Italian-American Law Society hosted its annual La Legge con Brio event at the PNC Recital Hall in the Mary Pappert Music School. Emcees, Professor Joseph Sabino Mistick, L'79, and Professor John Rago, L'87, hosted the talent show with alumni, staff, professors and students to raise funds for the Women's Cancer Center of UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital and Panucci's Promise, an organization established in the memory of Peggy Panucci, the mother of Brian Panucci, L'13, who passed away from breast cancer in 2011. Translated as "the law with spirit," the proceeds from La Legge con Brio go toward the purchase of therapeutic chairs and other comfort items by Panucci's Promise, donated to women undergoing chemotherapy treatment at the cancer center. ■



## Squashing It

Professor Steven Baicker-McKee has been an athlete all his life. In recent years, squash has become his sport of choice, and he is a three-time national champion for his age group. As part of Pittsburgh Squash, he recently competed as a wildcard player in an international squash tournament in the Steel City.

Prior to the event, he told his students he would be competing, and unbeknownst to him, they showed up to cheer him on—even creating purple shirts with his logo from his website. Baicker-McKee lost his match (to a 28-year-old



pro from Germany) but was overjoyed at the presence of his students. He said, "It was extremely kind and heartwarming; I felt really emotional that so many students came, and I couldn't have appreciated it more." ■

---

## Growing Future Judges Panel held

Growing Future Judges: A Panel & Reception was held Feb. 20 at the Power Center, with more than 85 Allegheny County Bar Association (ACBA) members attending. They met with Duquesne Kline School of Law students and students from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. There were 125 law students who attended and met with ACBA members and learned more about the ACBA and its different sections, divisions and committees. The judges at the event provided students with thoughtful conversation about the evolving role of the judiciary as they talked about their journeys to the bench. ■





# Moot Court Round-up

## Duquesne Kline School of Law Shines at the 54th Annual William B. Spong, Jr. Moot Court Competition

by Erin Karsman

Two teams from Duquesne Kline School of Law's Appellate Moot Court Board competed at the highly prestigious 54th Annual William B. Spong, Jr. Moot Court Competition hosted by William & Mary Law School. Second-year students Emily Veltri and Lewis Richardson advanced to the octofinals, while Megan Penn, 3L, and Jason Whiting, 4E, reached the quarterfinals. With 42 teams from law schools nationwide participating, Duquesne Kline School of Law's strong showing underscores its national reputation in appellate moot court. The William B. Spong competition is among the most prestigious and competitive moot court events nationally.

Both Duquesne Kline School of Law teams argued on and off brief two times and advanced out of preliminary rounds with perfect records. At the round of 32, both teams were the higher seeded team and advanced to the round of 16. At the round of 16, the team of Veltri and Richardson lost in a close round to Texas Tech Law School. After beating Tulane Law in the round of 16, the team of Penn and Whiting advanced



to the round of eight as the higher seeded team—ultimately falling to Washington University Law School, who went on to win second place at the competition. The teams were coached by Adjunct Professor Amy Kerlin, L'18, senior associate at Reed Smith. ■

## ABA National Appellate Advocacy Competition—Brooklyn Regional

The Appellate Moot Court Board sent two teams to compete in the prestigious ABA National Appellate Advocacy Competition—Brooklyn regional. Thirty-one teams from across the country competed at the competition.

After arguing on and off brief four times, Duquesne Kline School of Law's team of Annabelle LaRosa, 3L, Madison Lawrie, 3L, and Reilly Wagner, 3L, advanced to the semi-final round where they lost in a very close split decision. Along the way, the team beat teams from Northeastern Law School, New York Law School and Marquette Law School. The team also earned an award for writing the fourth Best Brief in the competition.

Duquesne Kline School of Law's team of Elizabeth Stern, 2L, Joe Kelly, 2L, and Ciaran Lamb, 2L, had three impressive rounds of competition (which included beating a strong team from Stetson



University College of Law) but narrowly missed advancing to the round of 16. Notably, Stern distinguished herself among more than 90 advocates, earning the sixth Best Advocate award.

Adjunct Professor Erin Karsman, who directs the Appellate Moot Court Program as well as the Thomas R. Kline

Center for Judicial Education, and Adjunct Professor Amy Kerlin, L'15, had the pleasure of coaching both teams. The teams' exceptional successes are a result of months of hard work, practice and dedication. ■





## National Energy & Sustainability Moot Court Competition

Two teams from Duquesne Kline School of Law's Appellate Moot Court Board both emerged as top-10 finishers at the National Energy & Sustainability Moot Court Competition hosted by West Virginia University College of Law in Morgantown, W.Va. This year's problem included four real-world energy issues concerning "forever chemicals" in our waterways and the storage of hazardous waste from coal-generated power plants. Our students tackled multiple complex legal issues in the area of environmental and administrative law dealing with the Clean Water Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and administrative deference.

Both teams argued seven times over three days, advancing to the quarterfinals amongst a field of stiff competition. Duquesne Kline School of Law's first team, consisting of Peyton Norton, 2L, and Andrew Hill, 3L, argued exceptionally throughout the competition, and emerged as the second-seeded team after five preliminary rounds of argument. After advancing, Norton and Hill beat Ohio State in the Sweet 16 round.

Duquesne Kline School of Law's second team, consisting of Simon Jaronski, 2L, Kaelyn Underwood, 2L, and Drew Gudenburr, 2L, also delivered impressive performances. In the preliminary rounds, the team faced tough opponents, including oralists from William & Mary, Louisiana State University and the University of Hawaii, but prevailed as the fourth-best team after six rounds of argument. Jaronski, Underwood and Gudenburr then defeated Ohio State to advance to the quarterfinals.

Both Duquesne Kline School of Law teams argued seven times over three days, demonstrating exceptional advocacy skills. The teams ultimately fell in the quarterfinal rounds—Norton and Hill lost to the University of Virginia, while Jaronski, Underwood and Gudenburr narrowly lost to Appalachian State.

The teams were coached by Duquesne Kline School of Law alumnae Morgan Null and Devon Ferris. ■

## Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition

A team from Duquesne Kline School of Law participated in the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition, the world's largest moot court competition. Competing in the Eastern U.S. Regional Rounds, the team presented oral arguments on complex issues of international law, facing off against teams from the University of Akron School of Law, New York University School of Law, New York Law School and the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School.

Representing Duquesne Kline School of Law were Olivia Bondi, 3L, Brian Davis, 3L, Daniel Kennedy, 3L, Darren McKenzie, 2L, and Emma Romig, 3L, who dedicated months to preparing for the competition. This marks the school's first time competing in Jessup in recent memory, and the team gained invaluable experience honing their advocacy skills.



The team achieved notable success, including a decisive 9-0 victory over Akron Law. Additionally, the team had a narrow loss against Penn Law, where the Duquesne Kline memorial scored higher, demonstrating the strength of the team's written submissions.

This year's Jessup problem involved questions of state sovereignty, jurisdiction over foreign officials, maritime boundary disputes and the legal implications of climate change on territorial claims. As part of the competition, the team not only argued these issues in oral rounds but also drafted and submitted comprehensive written memorials for both the Applicant and Respondent sides.

The team was coached by Adjunct Professor Martin McKown, L'15. ■

## Robert F. Wagner National Labor and Employment Law Moot Court Competition



A team from the Duquesne Kline School of Law's Appellate Moot Court Board competed at the 49th Annual Robert F. Wagner National Labor and Employment Law Moot Court Competition in New York City. Makenzie Violette, 3L, and Mari Miller, 4E, argued on and off brief twice, facing teams from Washburn University School of Law and Stetson University College of Law. Violette and Miller narrowly missed advancing to the octo-final round.

The competition, which included 40 teams, including teams from Marquette and Cornell, was hosted at the New York Law School in Tribeca and is one of the oldest and most prestigious labor and employment law competitions in the country. This year's problem included current issues involving whether a leave of absence qualifies as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA and the rule-making authority of the FTC related to its recent noncompete rule. Serena Tamburrino, L'20, coached the team. ■



# Mock Trial Competition Updates

by Peter Giglione, L'02

## American Association for Justice Competition

Duquesne Kline School of Law students Anna Donnelly, Emily Rossetti, Sydney Sherman and Kaitlyn Soltez, coached by Taylor Corn, L'18, and Anthony Hassey, L'17, defeated Temple University, the University of Buffalo and the University of Pittsburgh to advance to the regional semi-final round of the AAJ regional round in Philadelphia. Our Duquesne Kline team then defeated Villanova University in the semis to advance to the final round, where they narrowly lost to Akron University. ■



## Academy of Trial Lawyers Competition



This year, due to a last-minute cancellation, Duquesne Kline School of Law was asked to supply another team to this year's tournament, hosted by the Academy of Trial Lawyers of Allegheny County. Fortunately, Duquesne Kline assigned a sufficient number of students to allow our School of Law to field a second team, but those students had only around 60 hours to prepare!

The first Duquesne Kline team of Megan Penn, Lachlan Loudon, Amelia Burkel and Christian Palmer faced the College of William & Mary, an excellent team that won this competition several times, including very recently. The second Duquesne Kline team of Wendy Lynch, Fatima Oyala-Ramos and Fridah Sanchez faced Widener University Commonwealth. While the Dukes performed well, the competition has only one preliminary round, so only two teams advanced. The Duquesne Kline team was coached by Annette Dohanics, L'20, and Ryan Naumann, L'17. ■



---

## National Trial Competition

Duquesne Kline sent two teams to the National Trial Competition—the regional round was in Philadelphia. The first team of Khloe Manupelli, 2L, Nicholas Spinelli, 3L, and Leigha Pertz, 3L, defeated the University of Pennsylvania and Widener University Commonwealth before narrowly losing to Drexel University. They were one point away from advancing to the semi-finals. The second team was Emily Migdal, 2L, Dylan Krett, 3L, and Isabel Papariella, 2L. They faced Temple University, Pennsylvania State University and the University of Pittsburgh, but unfortunately did not advance. The Duquesne Kline teams were coached by Maggie Cooney, L'18, Bob Daley, L'98, Abigail Hudock, L'24, and David Martin, L'20. ■

---



## South Texas Challenge

The South Texas College of Law Mock Trial Challenge team consisted of Bella Biancone, Olivia Bondi, Alexander Giatras and Makenzie Violette. This is one of the most difficult trial advocacy competitions in the country. The Dukes faced Brigham Young University, Baylor University, Southern Methodist University and Ohio Northern University. The Duquesne Kline team was coached by Shreya Desai, L'21, Matthew Newman, L'17, and Emily Sanchez-Parodi, L'20. ■



# JURIS Magazine

## Spring 2025 Preview

[jurismagazine.com](http://jurismagazine.com)[X @jurisduqlaw](#) [f Juris Magazine](#)

---

### ■ **Nationwide Injunctions: A Double-Edged Sword in Federal Court Decisions**

*By Editor-in-Chief Jurry A. Bajwah*

---

Nationwide injunctions by federal judges are celebrated by some and loathed by others. Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 65 permits federal district courts to issue preliminary and permanent injunctions, and places no limit on federal courts' power to issue injunctions that require defendants to cease taking action against nonparties.

Supporters argue that the injunctions promote uniformity and judicial efficiency by preventing enforcement of a potentially unconstitutional rule of law or a rule of policy across the country against anyone but the individual plaintiffs. Thus, broad relief would avoid a patchwork of different rule from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, which in cases such as immigration or any other federal policy having a broad impact may serve as an important determiner. Examples are cases such as *Texas v. United States*, 328 F. Supp. 3d 662, and *City of Chicago v. Sessions*, 321 F. Supp. 3d 855, and so on, where they restrain the irreparable harm that is due to application of a statute in one state and not in another.

On the contrary, critics contend that nationwide injunctions freeze laws prematurely and thus stop the legal process from fully developing, barring a chance for circuitry equity splits. Some critics, notably Justice Clarence Thomas, contend that they exceed federal equitable powers and undermine the certiorari process in favor of a decision from a single judge over a more thoroughly discussed matter (*Trump v. Hawaii*, 585 U.S. 667; *CASA de Md., Inc. v. Trump*, 971 F.3d 220). So-called forum-shopping and competing claims between courts further aggravate the opposition to nationwide injunctions.

This article attempts to dissect both arguments and scrutinize the utility of nationwide injunctions.

---

### ■ **AI-Powered Predictive Tools and the Criminal Justice System—a Triumph or a Tragedy?**

*Senior Editor Hannah Dean*

---

Artificial intelligence tools that purport to predict future criminal activity, either by a person or in a certain location, have been utilized by the criminal justice system for nearly a decade. These tools are often used to support government agencies and courts in decision-making, especially when they are understaffed and have heavy caseloads. For instance, judges may use AI-powered predictive tools as part of their sentencing decisions, or a police department may use an automated acoustic tool to determine where gunshots are occurring and thus where to deploy its officers. Though these tools can help increase efficiency, and their creators argue that they can reduce the bias that may affect human decision-making, many advocacy groups have raised concerns about biases within the data that the tools rely on, as well as the discriminatory impacts they have on people of color. This article will explore the use of these tools in the criminal justice system, and assess the risks and benefits of the ongoing expansion of this use, particularly in criminal courts.



---

### ■ **How One California Law is Causing an Influencer Exodus**

*Senior Editor Bianca Ortalano*

Social media has seen a rise in family and child influencers over the years. On daily “vlogs” showing a family’s day-to-day life, exciting events or even sometimes medical emergencies, many kids now grow up with a camera filming their every move. These videos may even include a family’s journey moving from one state to another to “live a better life.” As parents begin to run social media accounts starring their children, one might think that they have their kids’ best interests in mind. However, one new law coming out of California is shining a light on a more troubling incentive. Following the exposure of child abuse experienced by kids on social media, California Gov. Gavin Newsom decided to expand protection for children in the entertainment industry. Cal Fam Code § 6752 dictates that employers of minors who are involved in entertainment contracts shall set aside 15% of that minor’s gross earnings to be held in trust for the benefit of that minor. On its face, this law may seem to be cracking down on child exploitation, yet many influencers are using it as motivation to leave the state for good. As the future of child influencers continues to adapt, the law must follow closely behind. By exploring the world of social media and breaking down exactly what the statute requires—and how adults are getting around it—individuals can learn more about the clouded lifestyle that is being an influencer.

---

### ■ **The Future of Offshore Wind Projects**

*Junior Editor Mia Hoetzlein-Sirman*

US Wind is attempting to develop offshore wind facilities off the eastern coast of Delaware and Maryland in order to provide more clean energy to states. The offshore wind facilities would be located in federal water and regulated by Maryland. However, these wind turbines would be visible from the Delaware coast and connect to Delaware’s power grid. Many residents of Delaware believe that these offshore facilities will negatively impact the tourism industry and the wildlife in the region. The Sussex County Council voted to reject US Wind’s permit on the basis that it would not benefit Delawareans enough to justify the downsides of the project. Further Worcester County, Md., is attempting to prevent US Wind’s purchase of necessary land in Ocean City, Md., in order to preserve the fishing industry. US Wind plans to appeal the rejection and attempt to move forward with the project.

---

### ■ **Click to Cancel: FTC’s Rule to Combat Unwanted Subscriptions**

*Junior Editor Chase Boss*

In October 2024, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) approved its “Click-to-Cancel” Rule, which had been designed to protect consumers from misleading marketing practices. The rule mandates businesses to disclose all material terms of advertised “free” trials and auto-renewing subscriptions upfront and to provide an easy cancellation process. The basic premise of these requirements: canceling should be as easy as subscribing.

Despite this, the rule immediately faced challenges from trade associations that argued the FTC lacked authority and failed to comply with procedural requirements. Additionally, these groups have suggested the new rule was overly ambiguous and overbroad. The FTC contends that the rule complies with and broadens protections established by the Restore Online Shoppers’ Confidence Act and the Telemarketing Sales Rule.

In January, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals denied a petition to stay the rule’s effective date. The court issued its decision without explanation and set a briefing schedule, further prolonging the dispute between business groups and consumer advocates. This feature article will examine the rule, its proposed changes and the issues on appeal.



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR AMAZING DAY OF GIVING SUPPORT!

Thank you to our extraordinary alumni and friends who overwhelmed us with generosity on this year's Day of Giving on Feb. 5! Because of your immense support, 2025 was our best Day of Giving yet! Duquesne Kline School of Law raised more than \$129,000, beating last year's total amount through 105 gifts!

You answer the call to elevate our students and Law School each year. Duquesne Kline School of Law continues to rise thanks to your gracious goodwill. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your immense kindness and your investment in empowering our students to lead. Thank YOU!

